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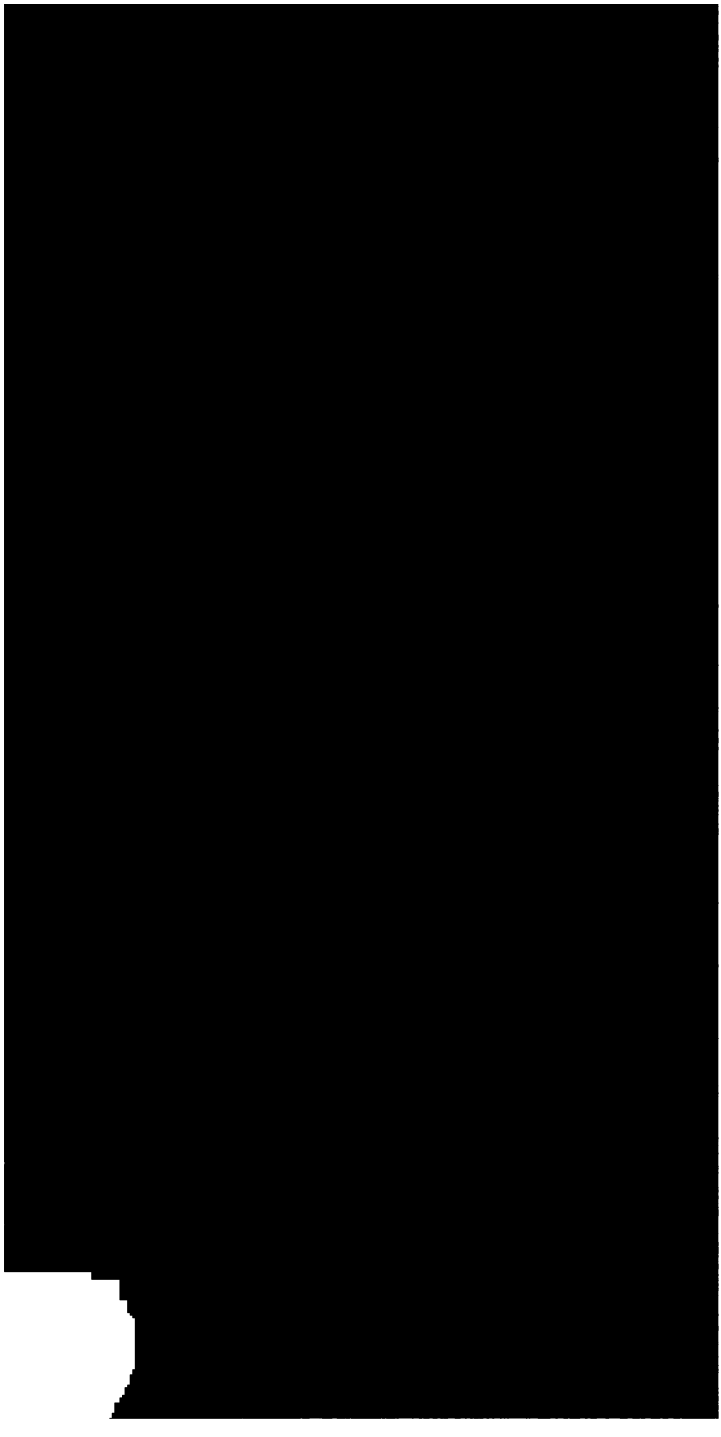
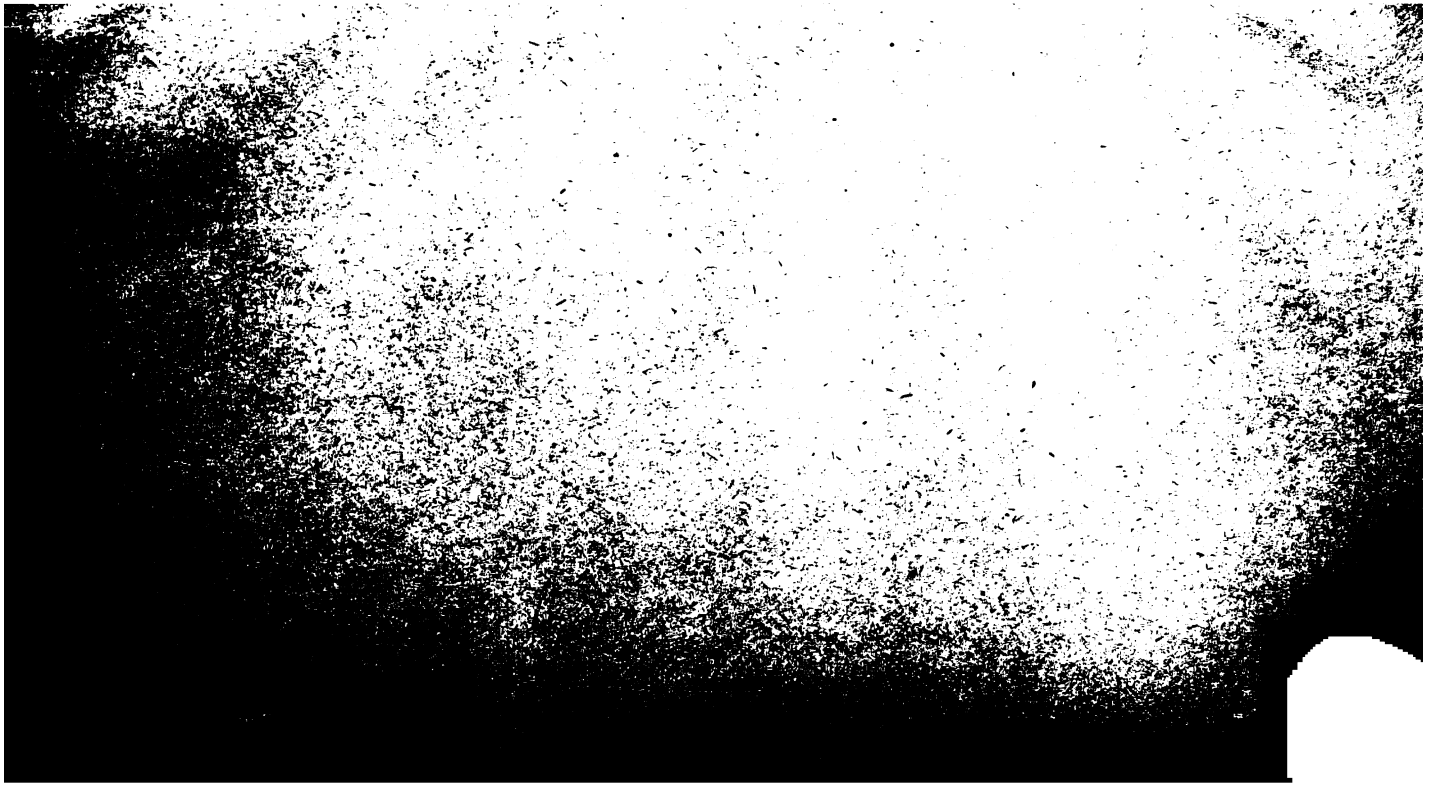
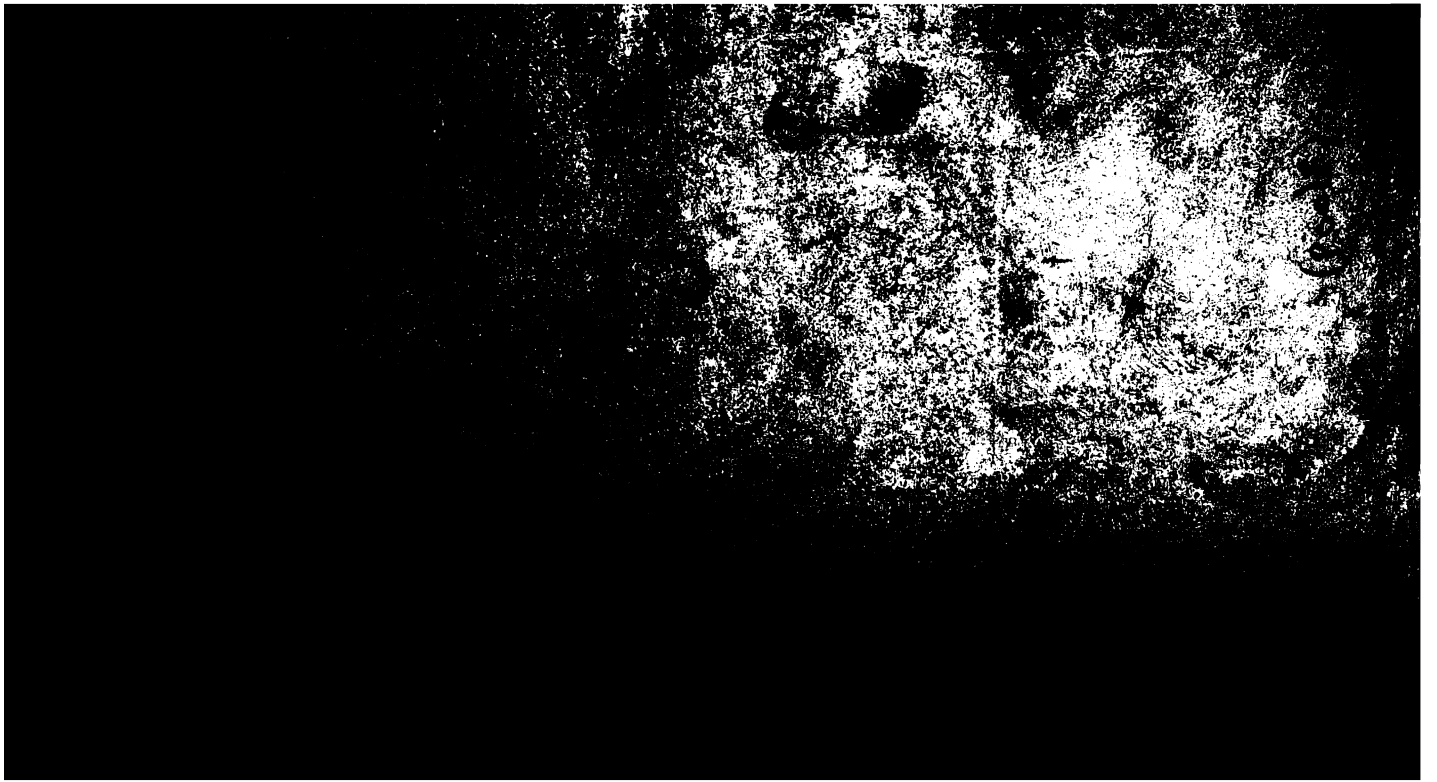
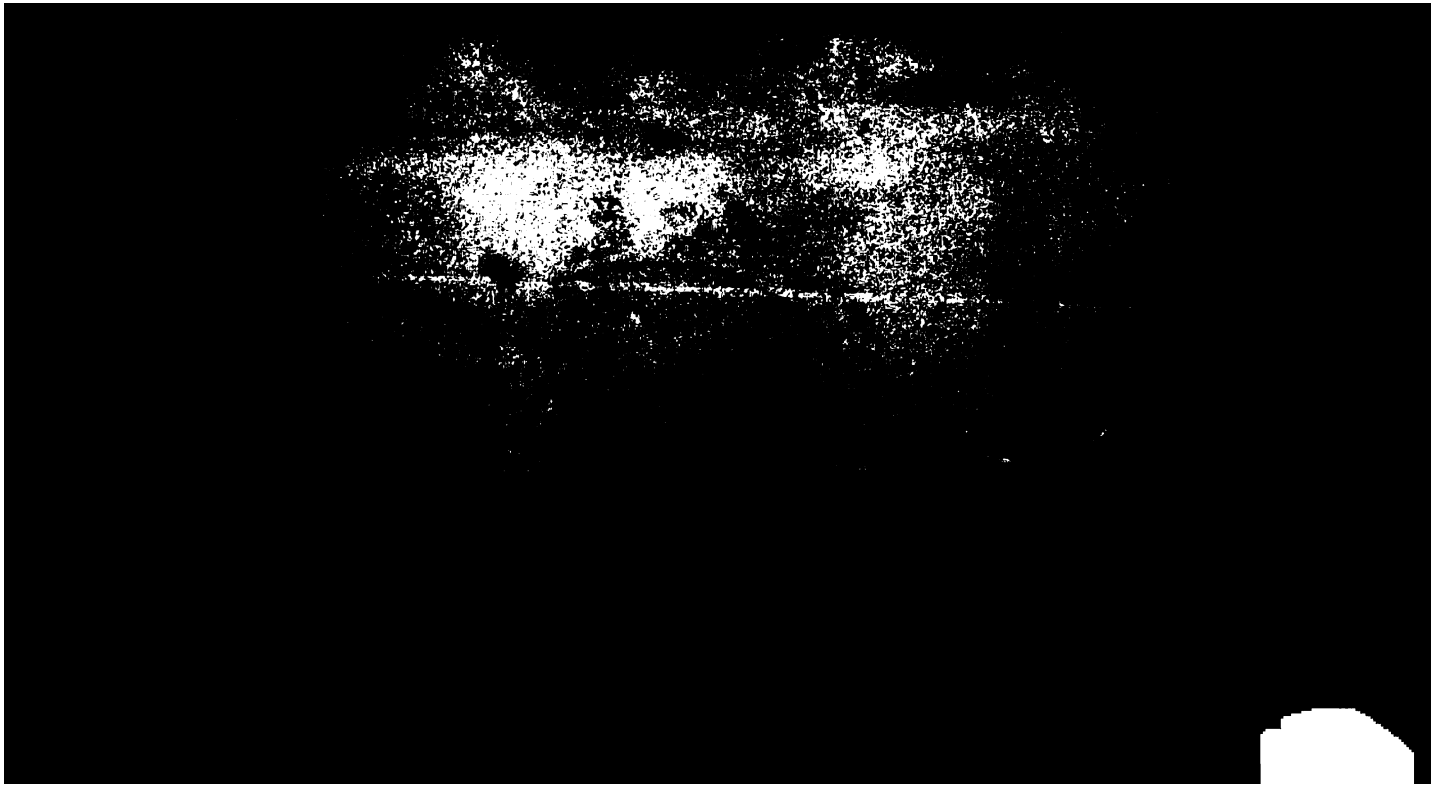


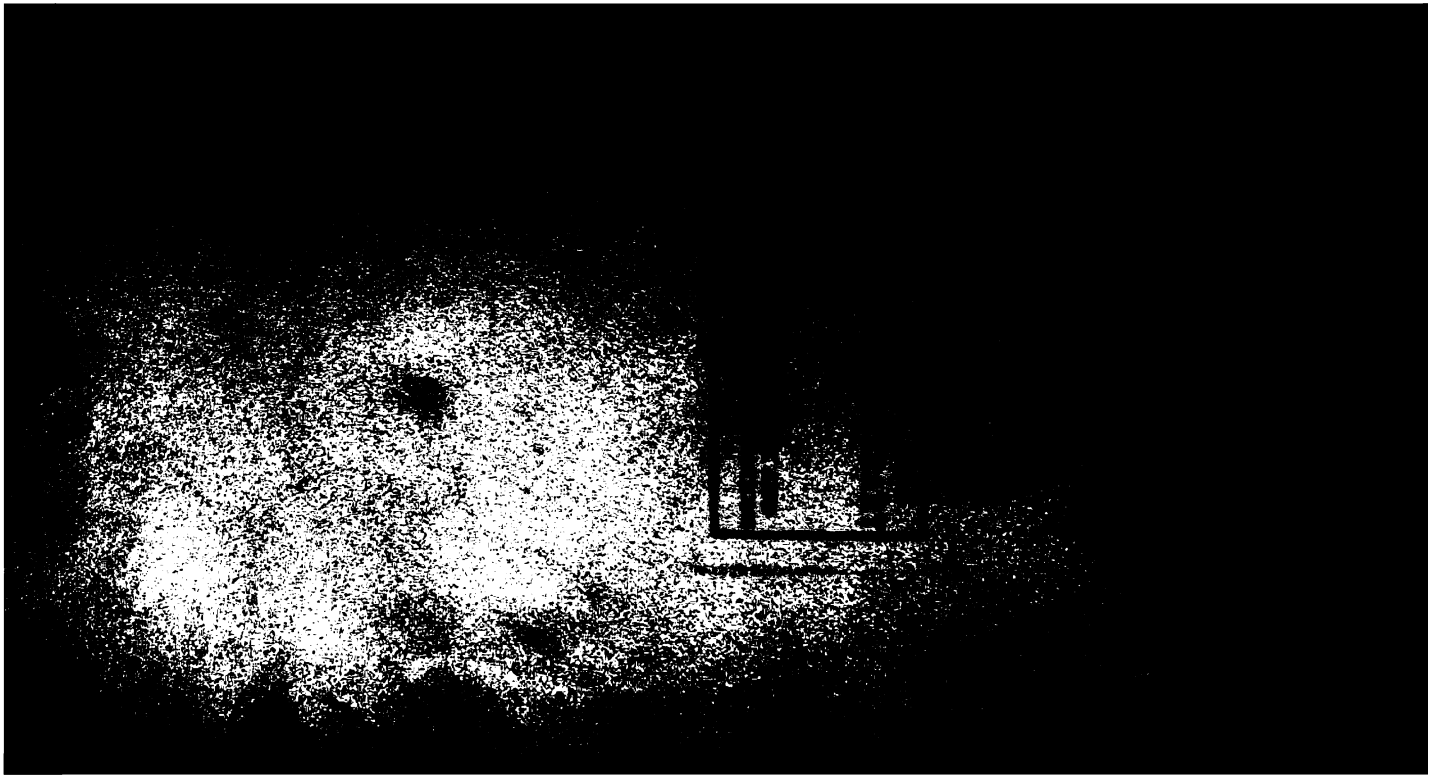






FESTIVITIES,

&c. &c.



FESTIVITIES:

and Characters.

FROM

THE MODERN DRAMA,

SPECIMENS.

JOHN POOLE, Esq.,

"PAUL PRY," "LITTLE PEDLINGTON," &c. &c.

LONDON:

AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1845

LENOX LIBRARY
NEW YORK

London:
Printed by STEWART and MURRAY,
Old Bailey.

TO

JOHN HARDWICK, ESQ., D.C.L.

AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONIAL OF FRIENDSHIP,

This Volume

IS INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

The late Mr. James Harris, the excellent manager of that, till lately, was a *Theatre* in Covent-Garden, having objected to something which he proposed to be done in the Christmas Pantomime, that it had been done before, inquired, "How long ago?"

"Twenty years, Sir."

"Did it succeed?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then do it again."

The Tales, Sketches, &c., which are collected together in the present Volume, have already appeared, scatteredly, in various publications: — the "London," the "New Monthly," the "Athenæum," &c. From the circumstance alone of their previous dispersion, they would, to the greater number of readers, be new; but, in addition to that, though they *have* "been done before," many of them were done "twenty years ago." The question concerning their success it is not for me to answer.

The "Beauties of the Modern Drama" are the seniors of the collection. Written not in a spirit of ill-nature, they were laughed at even by those whose peculiarities of style and manner they attempted to render prominent. The foremost in the train, indeed (the late Mr. Morton) could well afford a laugh at a playful satire; for he possessed, as a dramatist, many qualities of a very high order. As a man, he was irreproachable.

To this short notice I shall only add, that, since

[illegible] to exhibit these "Beauties," certain [illegible] sins have been committed, which [illegible] amiable to a niche in the Gallery—the reader's [illegible] servant,

J. P.

3rd December, 1844.

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CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

AT DRIBBLE HALL,

Part the First.

SQUIRE DRIBBLE.

"[illegible], six to-day," said Tom Heartall, whom I met coming out of the club as I was entering it.

"It has been booked these ten days," replied I.

"You should be punctual, there's a good fellow," continued Heartall, "for I have invited a stranger to join us."

"Well, well," said I: "but you press for punctuality as if it were the necessary consequence of your having invited a stranger to dine with you."

"And, so it is, in this instance," replied he. "Yesterday I dined at Worthington's, (who, you know, is to be one of my party,) and there I met [illegible]. He has some business which will keep him in town for a few days; and, as he has taken his quarters with Worthington, I was obliged, in decency, to ask him to accompany his

host. He seems to me to be a queer fellow; and Worthington, who is always anxious to promote every one's comfort, hinted to me, in his kind-hearted way, that punctuality would oblige *him;* for that his friend was as savage as a bear if made to wait for his meals a minute beyond the appointed feeding-time."

"A pleasant acquaintance you have made there. What is his name?"

"Dribble."

"Dribble! Surely I have heard that name before. Is he an Essex man?"

"Why," replied Heartall, "he is not exactly what, when speaking of the native gentry of the county, we should call an Essex man, though, certainly, he has a place in Essex."

"I'll lay my life it is the same: Dribble—*'Squire* Dribble, of Dribble Hall, near Poppleton-End, on the road to Little-Pedlington?"

"The very same," replied Heartall: "his house is the show-place of the neighbourhood."

"I remember: it was either the landlady at Squashmire-gate, or some one else, who told me that all the world went to see Dribble Hall, which was full of curiosities, but that the 'Squire himself was the greatest curiosity in it. I rejoice at this opportunity of meeting him," continued I, "for I missed one when I chanced to be in his neighbourhood."

[illegible] in the early part of [illegible], shortly after my return from [illegible]

[illegible] is the son of Barnaby Dribble, [illegible] lifetime, was a small grocer in [illegible] Fish-street-hill. To many persons it [illegible] interesting to know that Crooked-lane was [illegible] till within these few years, it was, [illegible] the crookedest lane in all London. [illegible] the magic of modern improvement, it has [illegible] of this its supreme distinction; and [illegible] remains of Crooked-lane (though it [illegible] the name) is as straight as an arrow.

[illegible], as a boy at school, was an industrious, [illegible] boy, with a natural disposition to "turn [illegible] penny"—his own interpretation of the [illegible] being somewhat an enlarged one, as it included within its range the getting the best at a [illegible] with a school-fellow, by any means short of [illegible] fraud. The penny *per diem*, which was [illegible]'s allowance of pocket-money, he would lay [illegible] father's shop in figs or raisins, which [illegible] to him at prime cost. Of these, he used [illegible] a small portion for his own eating (for, [illegible] dear of his life to the present, his love of [illegible] never completely overpowered his love [illegible]), the remainder he would dole [illegible] farthing's-worths, to his school-mates, re-

ducing the quantity for the money in proportion as their gluttony overcame their prudence, in exactly the same way as traders upon a more extensive scale regulate the price of a commodity according to the quantity in the market and the demand for it. Thus he was usually a gainer of two or three farthings by the day's transactions. In addition to this, which might be considered as little Master Ephraim's *regular* traffic, he would sometimes, if his customers happened to be short of money, generously sell his farthing's-worth on credit; or he would even lend a boy a farthing in hard cash, on promise of being paid a halfpenny for it at the week's end; and this he would do upon no better a security than the deposit of a top, a ball, a book, a penknife, or any other trifle, provided it were of sufficient value to protect him against any possible loss. His mother was wont to say that Ephraim was a "deep one, who knew how many beans made two;" whilst his no less admiring father was satisfied that their boy was a "'cute one, who would make his way in the world."

At the age of fourteen Ephraim was taken home to serve in his father's shop. Here he had many opportunities of exhibiting his "depth" and exercising his "'cuteness." It was astonishing with what dexterity and delight he would shuffle a few lumps of the twelve-penny into a customer's bag of the fourteen-penny sugar; and marvellous was the

would adjust the scales
pound of tea, withdrawing six
ounces, if it inclined the balance
two-and-twenty he had the
his parents. This calamity
by its leaving him the sole
of all the figs and treacle in the
about fourteen hundred pounds in

Ephraim Dribble sought, and
for the indulgence of the natural
of his heart. Was there a brother
driven to the verge of bankruptcy by
an hundred pounds or so, Ephraim was
assist him with the sum—merely taking
for it sundry chests of tea, or bags of
fourth of the market-price. Thus was
a worthy man delayed for a few months,
kind-hearted Ephraim exulted in the
virtue which was *not* its own and
To a man who, like him, lays himself
opportunities of performing generous actions,
exquisities are of frequent occurrence; so
end of ten years Dribble found that, by
assisting the distressed, his hundreds
into thousands.

to exercise this species of knight-
on a larger scale, he sold the shop in
opened a counting-house in Fen-

church-street, called himself Dribble and Co., and became a West-India merchant—that is to say, he would buy for ready-money, from any house which happened to be in a rickety condition, a whole consignment of sugar, coffee, pepper, or any other colonial produce, at a third or a fourth of its prime cost, and sell it, amongst the smaller traders, below its actual value, yet still at a considerable profit to himself. For several years he continued this successful mode of assisting his fellow-creatures, till about four years ago; when, having realized as much capital as, invested in the funds, would produce him a clear five thousand a-year, he resolved to retire from business and become a gentleman:—the latter portion of the resolution being much the more difficult to accomplish of the two.

Just at this time it happened that Tubbs, the eminent sugar-broker, failed. Tubbs's curiosity to visit foreign parts being suddenly excited by the event, and an immediate supply of money being requisite in order to enable Tubbs to gratify a curiosity so praiseworthy, he applied to his intimate friend Dribble for assistance. Dribble, whose purse was ever open to the unfortunate, instantly supplied his friend with the large sum of four thousand pounds; and his friend, who could hardly expect that any man would give him four thousand pounds for nothing, made over to him his country residence, Muscovado House, together with the acres there-

fairly suit Mr. Tibbs
this place, which, upon Mr.
to the property, was newly
Mr. Dribble retire; and
(commonly known as "the
seriously considers himself
Gentleman, in spite of the proverb
which he is held by the real gentry
without he cannot induce to recognize
Fifty-two, indeed, is rather late in
begin to think of *doing* the gentle-
Dribble, although he has had four years'
(as an actor would express it) by no
this part.

* * * * *

the twentieth of December that I re-
London from a continental tour which
nearly four months. My first visit
Tom Heartall. After some talk upon
subjects, Tom (with more of diffidence and
as I thought, the inquiry warranted)

consider yourself as engaged to dine
Christmas day?"

application I do," replied I; "for, for the
years, we have passed that day together.
circumstance I should have remained
humours of that convivial season in

Heartall burst into a hearty laugh: a sure sign that he was aware of some small calamity in store for me.

"Ha! ha! ha! So you have taken all this trouble for the express purpose of dining with us on Christmas day? Ha! ha! ha! My wife is at her mother's, in the New Forest, and will not be in town for a fortnight. Ha! ha! ha! All the children are with her. Ha! ha! ha! You have come to England purposely to keep up the charter—Ha! ha! ha!—and I have accepted an invitation for myself to Dribble Hall: so, so far as *we* are concerned, you are floored, my boy. Ha! ha! ha!—But," continued Heartall (laughing louder and longer than before), "I have worse news than that for you: Dribble has made a point of your spending Christmas at the Hall: I know you don't like him; but I, considering you as my property for that occasion, have disposed of you. In short, I have accepted the invitation on your behalf."

"Then, as you are not my accredited minister *près la cour de* Dribble Hall (as the diplomatic phrase is), but have acted wholly on your own responsibility, I repudiate your adhesion on my behalf, and leave you (as the diplomatic phrase is *not*, but as it very frequently might emphatically be) —I leave you to get out of the scrape as well as you can. Seriously," continued I, "I don't like your 'Squire Dribble. He is a person eminently

[illegible]; I know nothing of [illegible] but that is enough for [illegible]
[illegible] Chesterfield," said Heartall:
[illegible] in the observance of the
[illegible] politeness may be pardoned in con-
[illegible] sterling qualities of his heart; but
[illegible], to an offensive extent, in that
[illegible] which, independent of manner, is the
[illegible] offspring of humanity and innate bene-
[illegible] is an uncompromising egotist, in the
[illegible] of the word: he never defers, nor
[illegible] affect the civil semblance of deferring,
[illegible], comfort or convenience, the pleasure or
[illegible] of another; his own are always para-
[illegible] consideration."

[illegible] what you are thinking of," said
laughingly: "the wing of the chicken,
[illegible] the 'Squire here, at dinner, last
[illegible]

[illegible] was only one amongst a score,
[illegible] an illustration of his character as a
[illegible] remember Mrs. Heartall asked Mrs.
[illegible] of the chicken she should send her.
[illegible] interrupted the lady's reply by saying,
[illegible] liver-wing, if you please, Ma'am; it
[illegible] of the bird *I* care for." Then, he
[illegible] particular decanter before him (passing
[illegible]), because, as he said, that wine
[illegible] to *his* taste of any he had yet drunk;

and having selected, for his own eating, the finest fruit from three or four dishes, he amiably asked the lady on his left what *she* would like. In the evening, when several of the party requested your wife to sing '*Vivi tu*,' he interrupted her as she began, by saying *he* had rather she would sing something English, as *he* didn't much fancy Italian music. He prevented three others making a rubber at whist, where he was wanted as a fourth, because *he* just then preferred a round game; and, afterwards (having lost a few shillings), he turned sulky because the three others did not then choose to humour him by sitting down to whist."

"To say the truth," said Heartall, "I, myself, have no great affection for the fellow; and it is chiefly to please Worthington, who sees every thing and every body *couleur de rose*, that I have accepted this invitation. Now, do you also accept it to please me. In his own house, and towards his guests, Dribble *must* behave himself decently."

"Have you yet paid a visit at the Hall?"

"Not yet," replied Heartall. "Worthington has brought him to dine with me some half-dozen times since you met him here in the summer; and at his departure the 'Squire has always been so civil as to say that if *I happened to be going his way* he should be happy to see me: but this is the first special invitation he has honoured me with. He asks *you*, I take it, as a set-off against the dinner

[illegible] you left town; so, as he [illegible] into all his arrange- [illegible] never to invite him again (a [illegible] very easily taken should he not [illegible] further acquaintance), and be assured [illegible] escape a second invitation from him. [illegible] written to you. Here is his [illegible]

[illegible] letter ran thus:—

"Dribble Hall, near Poppleton-End,
2d Dec. 1835.

[illegible] Sir,

[illegible] dated 30th ult. and forwarded *per* [illegible] the satisfaction of inviting our friends, [illegible] Worthington and Heartall, to pass the [illegible] ensuing at my house, as above. In [illegible] to Mr. H. was conveyed a request [illegible] would accompany them. Both letters duly [illegible] them yesterday the 1st inst., as acknow- [illegible] to me dated same day, and duly [illegible] return of post, this morning, date as [illegible] to find, as *per* advice from Mr. H., [illegible] the date of his you had not returned to [illegible] but am glad to be favoured with his [illegible] on your behalf that you will accept my [illegible] spend the Xmas with us, i. e. *from the* [illegible] *morning of the 26th inclusive*, in case you [illegible] *on or before the 20th inst.* Should I [illegible] of your return *per* arrival of post on

the 21ST inst., at 10 A. M. (there or thereabouts), must invite somebody else to fill up the vacancy; as, upon these occasions, 8 is the number I always like to have at my table (neither more nor less), and, at present, standing thus, *viz.*

1. Myself.
2. Mrs. D. who joins in hopes of your return in time to make one.
3. Mr. John Flanks, } brother and sister of
4. Miss Susan Flanks, } above.
5. Mr. Ebenezer Dribble, first cousin to undersigned.
6. Thomas Brisbane Heartall, Esq. }
7. Francis Worthington, Esq. } Visitors.
8. Yourself (or as the case may be) }

Total 8.

"Please observe that unless I am advised of your return *punctually* by the time above specified (*say* 21*st inst.*) I shall invite Dr. Cawdle, of Poppleton, *in your room.* Please observe, also, that if you *do* favour me with your company, I shall expect you to remain *from* the 24th (arriving *at* or BEFORE 4, as I dine at that hour *precisely*, liking a long evening in the country) till the morning of the 26th, having made my arrangements to that effect. Say the 26*th*, because the London Coach (15 shillings in and 10 out, coachman and guard optional), which only runs on *alternate* days, will pass the end of my lane at about 11 in the forenoon of that day, allow-

before you start;
probably miss that convey-
from the Hall till the
interfere with *other* arrange-
(for self and Mrs. D.)
most obedient Servant,
EPHRAIM DIBBLE.
these together, perhaps you may think
agreeable to come down *per* chaise, in which
order the people at the last stage to
to take you away on the 26th inst. (say
11), as I have no one I could conve-
to order horses for you, the distance
miles.
E. D.

P.S. I re-open this to say that by 11, I
A. M. being *most particularly engaged to*
that day.
E. D."

"Clerk-like habits, indeed!" exclaimed I.
plague on the fellow! he has drawn up a
invitation as guardedly and cautiously as if
deed of assignment of half his property;
out a list of his party exactly as he would
one of his old Crooked-lane bills of par-
agreeable person to pass a Christmas with!
which could concoct such an epistle as
was, nor ever can be, actuated by one
social impulse. His hospitality (if,
this extraordinary invitation to his house

deserve the name) is so regulated as to suit his own pleasure and convenience in every point. The fact is, he is living in a lone house, in a dull district; he wants society to enliven *his own* Christmas; so he writes up to town for it, just as he would for a basket of fish for his Christmas dinner, because he cannot get it in the country, and imagines that he is to be supplied as readily with the one as with the other—and thanked, perhaps, for his custom, into the bargain. It is said that the boy is father to the man. *That* is certainly true in the present instance: for 'Squire Dribble, of Dribble Hall, is unquestionably the son of little Ephraim Dribble, the petty, peddling school-boy who used to traffic in small grocery. I'll none of him."

"My dear fellow," said Heartall, affecting a grave countenance, "I'm truly sorry for you, but it is too late to get out of it."

"Not for me," joyfully exclaimed I. "To-day is the twentieth; I have merely to suppress the fact of my return; delay my reply to this letter, and, according to the strict terms of it, the fortunate Doctor Cawdle will succeed to the chair vacant by the lapse of me, the original nominee."

"Too late, I tell you. Early this morning I heard of your return, and instantly wrote to inform Dribble of it. In fact—ha! ha! ha!—I added that you will have great pleasure in availing yourself of his invitation."

apart, I must say that——"

so grave about the matter," said

your share of the misfortune as

with patience and resignation. I go

Worthington, who likes this cub for the

reason, I verily believe, that good-

Toddy likes her ugly, barking, snarl-

because nobody else does; so, as I said

must go to please me. I will admit that

look upon our prospect of a 'merry Christ-

a very brilliant one; but we shall be three to

rate; and, with the season to aid us, the

in it if we cannot manage to beat sufficient

into the 'Squire to make us happy and

for the time."

Few of the minor matters of life are

long contest; so, yielding to Heartall's en-

I promised to meet him and Worthington,

to 'Squire Dribble's, on the morning

-fourth.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES AT DRIBBLE HALL.

Part the Second.

THE FESTIVITIES.

PUNCTUALITY at a start on a journey is all but an impossibility. In hazarding this assertion, I do not intend to cast the slightest reproach either on Her Majesty's mails, or the "Wonders," "Darts," "Arrows," "Swallows," and "Eagles," which are continually shooting and flying to all parts of the kingdom,* or on the respective drivers thereof: *they* are always awfully exact to their time: the assertion applies only to the traveller. Do you doubt it? Take your stand at the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly. The clock strikes four. Simultaneously with the last beat of the hour, the Bath "Regulator," for instance—(and this one instance will serve as well as the hundred which are of

* True at the time when this paper was written, eight years ago! *Now* ——— ! !

... Bath "Regulator," which has ... time, dashes off. Within ... hackney-coach drives furiously up ... three miles an hour, the horses puffing, ... and steaming, and the coach-... nearly exhausted by the labour ... Out steps a stoutish gentleman, ... a great coat, with a scarlet worsted ... round his neck, and a cloak hanging ... for though the month be July, and ... fine, a prudent English traveller will ... on the "look-out for squalls." Not ... there, as he had expected to do, ... himself on his having arrived in ... In reply to his inquiry, how long it ... the Bath "Regulator" comes up, he ... it has been gone nearly a minute; but ... will run as fast as he can, and the coach ... encounter any accidental stoppages on its ... is some chance of his overtaking it at ... As there is no time to be lost, riding ... is, of course, out of the question; so off ... But (you will say) there were three other ... in the coach when it arrived at Piccadilly, ... infer that they had been punctual. No; ... not. One had booked his place at the ... Head, Aldgate, and would have lost it ... (thanks to the stoppages which some-... even in the city!) he had not been ena-

bled to come up with it on Ludgate Hill; whilst the other two, whose appointed starting-place was the Bolt-in-Tun in Fleet Street, had been in the desperate predicament of being nearly five minutes behind time, and were only saved by the providential event of the Bath "Regulator" being hemmed in by two coal-waggons, the Fulham errand-cart, the Lord Mayor's coach, and a brewer's dray, just under Temple Bar, where they found it.

If at a start on a journey to be made in a public conveyance, which we are aware possesses, in common with time and tide,* the accommodating attribute of waiting for no one, punctuality be all but impossible; its approximation to an impossibility is certainly not diminished when the journey is to be performed in a private carriage, with post-horses at one's own command. As, under the most favourable condition of the weather and the roads, it is a four hours' drive to Dribble Hall, Worthington (who had volunteered the use of his commodious travelling-chariot for the excursion) requested that, on the morning of the twenty-fourth, I would be in readiness at ten o'clock precisely; at which hour, he, accompanied by Heartall, would call for me. "Thus," said Worthington, "we may do the thing easily, and have a spare hour, or so, to rest and dress, when we arrive at the Hall." "Now, remember," (and this he uttered with all the earnestness of a

* Now (1844) we must read, time, tide, and railway-trains.

[illegible] said: "The Squire will want [illegible] he will be sadly put out of [illegible] him waiting for it."

[illegible] the twenty-fourth of December [illegible] called a rather fine-ish morning, for there was neither hail, rain, [illegible] there was merely a slight fog, [illegible] sufficient to prevent one's seeing [illegible] side of the street to the other. [illegible] being one of the most punctual of [illegible] more than twenty minutes behind the [illegible] himself had appointed to call for [illegible] the fortunate consequence of this delay [illegible] found Heartall so nearly ready to [illegible] him, that he was kept shivering in his [illegible] Heartall's door for hardly more than a [illegible] hour. As for myself, by the time they [illegible] me I had just finished my breakfast and [illegible] of my newspaper (by lamp-light), so [illegible] nothing in the world to do but dress; [illegible] toilet I accomplished with so much [illegible] that, as the clock struck eleven,— [illegible] all, was only sixty minutes past ten [illegible] appointed),—we were fairly on our [illegible]

[illegible] exclaimed Worthington, "we had not [illegible] We shall not get down to the Hall [illegible] four. However, we will tip the post- [illegible] and endeavour to make up for lost time."

Our road lay eastward. "O for a curse to kill!" exclaims some merciless tragedy hero. Were there a curse of power to shatter into fragments, and disperse a villanous compound of bricks and mortar, there were not at this moment existing an atom of that vile, worthless, wicked, and most unwarrantable Wych-Street. You arrive at a city feast just [illegible] late for the turtle: you had encountered a stoppage in Wych Street.—How was it, when you intended to set off by the Rotterdam steamer the other day, you did not reach the Tower Wharf till twenty-minutes after its departure?—Your coach had been blocked up in Wych Street.—Hearing reports unfavourable to your bankers' solidity, you jump into your cab and drive down to Lombard Street for the purpose of drawing out your balance. On your arrival, you are told that these worthy people had stopped payment about half an hour before! Your curses are showered upon Wych Street, wherein you had been jammed for nearly twice as long. Every hour in the day it is the object of the heart-born execrations of the numberless unfortunates who are caught in it. But, alas! it is proof against every mode and form of anathema. Yet, owing to some strange fatality, coachmen (public and private), cabmen, post-boys, drivers of all denominations, every mother's son of them *will* lead you into that abominable and fatal ravine. So did it chance with us. We had proceeded half-way down it, when we were met by a

...ype of a broad-wheeled ... To pass each other ... remained but for one of ... The waggon could not, ... a long time neither could we. ... hedged with iron bars; behind ... hackney-coaches; and, behind those, ... hand-trucks, all jumbled together ... confusion. In what manner we ... I know not; but, in order to avoid ... the calamity, we ordered the post-... into Holborn.

"... loss in distance we shall save in time," ...

... full four when we get down to the ... Worthington.

... into the city the fog became more ... so, notwithstanding that all the ... brilliantly illuminated, our progress was ... was somewhat retarded also by another ... It happened to be cattle-day—so ... one of those agreeable days on which ... sheep and bullocks are driven from ... along the most crowded streets of the ... London is the only city in Europe ... shew so pretty a sight. Elsewhere the ... their melancholy doom in the suburbs, ... from the town; and their remains ... brought into it in carts, or trucks, or

on men's shoulders, or by some other such clumsy contrivance: but in London they are made to carry their own briskets, ribs, rounds, and steaks, their necks, shoulders, legs, saddles, and haunches, directly to that part of the capital where it is intended they should be consumed. Now it is clear that, by such means, much human labour, as well as considerable expenditure for artificial carriage—in contradistinction to the natural mode of self-transport here adopted—is spared: and these inestimable advantages are gained at no greater cost than that of spreading confusion and dismay over half the town; of an old woman or two frightened into fits; a few useless children smashed; and, occasionally, a man gored and tossed by an over-driven ox—this last event, however, tending greatly to the amusement of the spectators. Coupled with the state of the atmosphere, the day being, as I have said, cattle-day, our progress was but slow. Scarcely were we clear of one drove of bullocks, when we found ourselves in the midst of another. Then! the howling and barking of the dogs, the yells and shouts of the drovers, the roaring of the cattle, and their pretty innocent gambols! frisking and leaping about us, and occasionally thrusting their horns in at the carriage-windows—for as a precautionary measure (though one not tending to our personal comfort) we had been obliged to put down the glasses in order to save them from destruction. Well; at twelve o'clock we

[illegible] at which time (according [illegible] made by Worthington) we [illegible] fourteen miles further on our [illegible] another sigh from Worthing- [illegible] down to the Hall by four [illegible]," exclaimed he.

[illegible] the city the fog gradually dis- [illegible] the sun shone out brilliantly. We [illegible] on at a rapid rate—changed horses—on [illegible] about three o'clock, we arrived at [illegible], the last stage on the road to Dribble [illegible] we had still fourteen miles to travel, the [illegible] of which, besides, were along a narrow [illegible] macadamized. However, by dint of bribing [illegible], we might hope to be at our journey's [illegible] very much behind the appointed time. [illegible]'s benevolent countenance brightened [illegible].

"I like," said he, "to put any one out of [illegible] of all the 'Squire; for it is a thing he [illegible] poor fellow!"

[illegible] had not taken any refreshment since [illegible] we regaled ourselves, whilst the horses [illegible] ing-to, with some satisfactory, but clumsy- [illegible] sandwiches, and a glass of excellent home- [illegible]. And, then, forward again.

[illegible] post-boy, to do him justice, seemed resolved [illegible] the promised reward of an additional half- [illegible] honestly; for, though the road was not of

the best, he carried us over the first nine miles in fifty-five minutes. It was four o'clock as we turned into the narrow lane leading to the Hall, between which and ourselves lay, what the post-boy denounced as "five bitter bad miles." It was dark, too, and rather foggy, and the cold was intense. By this last circumstance, however, we were not much affected, the carriage being close and comfortable, and we well wrapped up in our cloaks.

"Worthington," said I, (recollecting the 'Squire's 'I dine at that hour *precisely*,') "I fear we shall make your friend wait a little for his dinner to-day."

"Wait!" exclaimed Worthington. He sighed, but made no further reply.

We had proceeded slowly and with some difficulty along the first mile of the lane, when the fog, which had been gradually increasing, enveloped us like fifty thousand Witney blankets. Suddenly the carriage made a dead halt. Worthington, in his eagerness to learn the cause of it, in letting down one of the front glasses shivered it to pieces. The post-boy announced to us the pleasing fact that it was impossible for him to proceed a step farther, for that he could not see his horses' ears. What was to be done? Having contemplated merely a day-light journey, the carriage-lamps had not been prepared.

"Then are we to pass our Christmas-eve in this pleasant place?" inquired Heartall.

[illegible] how we are to get out of it, Sir," [illegible] post-boy. "I can't go on, and it's too [illegible] handily, for there's a ditch six feet [illegible] ought to be somewhere about here, [illegible] can't say to a nicety, where."

[illegible] reply rendered Heartall's question less ex- [illegible] than it had at first appeared.

"[illegible] there is nothing for us to do," said I, "but [illegible] patiently for a few minutes: in that time the [illegible] may clear away."

"[illegible] hat, Sir!" exclaimed the post-boy; "*this* fog [illegible] away! Lord bless you, Sir, there's no chance [illegible]; I know *this* fog of old: when he comes [illegible] the sly, sneaking, slow way as he has done [illegible] afternoon, he doesn't clear away again in a [illegible]."

"[illegible] seriously," said Worthington, "what *is* to [illegible]?"

"[illegible], Sir, if we could get a light, we might [illegible] to——"

[illegible] was interrupted by a "halloo, there!" which [illegible] struggling through the dense fog with a moist [illegible] sound.

[illegible]tall, who will sometimes perpetrate a pun [illegible] the most untoward circumstances, joyfully [illegible]med, "I have some trust in that *hail* for [illegible] us through this fog."

[illegible] sound proceeded from an invisible cottage [illegible] happened to be within ten feet of us. We

replied to the salutation, and made known our unfortunate condition. Presently a lantern was seen at the carriage-door, and behind the lantern was the hazy, ill-defined, phantasmagoric figure of a man. We told him whither we were going, and offered him a good reward for his guidance. This he peremptorily refused, as his wife being very ill, not all the money in 'Squire Dribble's pocket (he said) should induce him to leave his home. As to the lantern, that was heartily at our service. We gave him a crown for the loan of it, and parted, mutually satisfied with the bargain—we, in our helpless condition, thinking that we had by much the best of it.

But here a new difficulty arose. The post-boy declared that the light would be of no manner of use to him unless it were carried at his horses' heads. We desired him to dismount, lead his horses, and carry it. This, he said, was impossible; for that his saddle-horse, owing to some infirmity of mind or temper, would either kick, or rear, or stand still, or back—in short, that he would do anything but advance unless he felt his rider on his back.

"Pleasant, again!" said Heartall. "Then, do you mean that one of us must get out and carry it?"

"If you please, gentlemen," was the consoling reply.

Here occurred a pause. No one seemed inclined

for the service. Worthington, indeed, [illegible] recovered from a severe attack of [illegible] being by many years the senior of the [illegible] could not fairly be expected to undertake it; [illegible] the performance of the agreeable duty lay [illegible] Heartall and me.

[illegible]—I think," said Heartall, "that after [illegible] cooped up for so many hours in a close car[illegible] there is nothing more delightful than getting [illegible] and stretching one's legs."

"I think so too," replied I: yet neither of us [illegible] the slightest inclination to put our opi[illegible] to a practical test.

"Suppose you and I take it by turns?" continued [illegible]

"I suppose we do," said I; "and suppose, more[illegible] you take the first turn."

[illegible] burst into a good-humoured laugh, [illegible] could no more be misunderstood than resisted. [illegible] a bitter cold night in December, in a dense [illegible] was compelled to quit the carriage and (lan[illegible] hand) pick my way, as best I might, along a [illegible] cart-road only ankle-deep in mud—ex[illegible] where it happened to be knee-deep. As, on [illegible] like this, I put forth no pretensions to being [illegible] a Lander, a Franklin, or a Denham, I [illegible] confess that I was by no means sorry when, [illegible] had acted the pleasant part of guide for [illegible] an hour, the light in the lantern was suddenly

extinguished, and I was enabled to resume my seat in the carriage. Yet even this was not the extreme of comfort; for, in consequence of the destruction of the front glass, I found my two companions themselves, who had not quitted their snug corners, shivering with cold and half choked by the fog. Fortunately the loss of our light was now a matter of but little importance, as the night had become sufficiently clear to allow the post-boy to make his way, though slowly, without it.

"How *very* odd!" exclaimed Worthington, as I re-entered the carriage; "Heartall and I were just saying we thought it almost time that one of us should turn out and relieve you."

"Indeed!—I have been thinking exactly the same thing for the last half-hour," replied I, somewhat drily.

"Come!" said Heartall, in a tone of consolation, "we are near the end of our journey. This is an unpromising beginning of our Christmas-eve, I own; but we shall soon be in a good warm house, with a comfortable dinner to welcome our arrival; and the 'Squire will make us drown the remembrance of these our mishaps and miseries in a bumper of his choicest!——Won't he, Worthington?"

"I—I hope so," hesitatingly replied the latter.

"Those are all good things in their way," said I; "but what I shall most delight in will be a change of dress."

[illegible] half-past six we entered the 'Squire's [illegible] and were presently driven up to the door of [illegible]. The door was already opened, and there [illegible] to receive us—not the 'Squire, nor any one of [illegible] family, but the 'Squire's man—Sam, who was [illegible] in his best livery waistcoat and smalls, and [illegible] *jacket!*

"I hope you're well, Sir," said Sam, addressing [illegible]ington, who was the only one of the party he [illegible] ever seen. And, without waiting for a reply, he continued, "Master says, Sir, hadn't you better [illegible] post-boy, at once, to be here with the horses to take you away again, at eleven o'clock, the day after to-morrow? as there won't be anybody he can [illegible] to go to Quig's Corner to order them."

"A hospitable commencement!" thought I; although, certainly, the 'Squire, according to the [illegible] conditions of his invitation, was perfectly jus[illegible] in it.

The order being given accordingly, we were [illegible]d into the dining-room.

[illegible] with folded arms and outstretched legs, in a [illegible] easy, red morocco chair, in the warm corner [illegible] fire-place, reclined the 'Squire. He did not [illegible] to receive us, but welcomed us with—

"Well, how d'ye do? Come, sit down without [illegible]mony. A miserable night, eh? Sitting here in [illegible] corner I didn't envy you your ride, that I can tell you. Come, sit down. Just the party I

told you you'd meet. Mrs. D., my dear, Mr. Heartall and his friend; my cousin, Mr. Ebenezer Dribble; and my wife's brother and sister, Mr. John Flanks and Miss Susan Flanks. Worthington, I needn't introduce you: you know everybody and everybody knows you. Well, I 'm glad you 're come at last, for it is more than half-past six, and I was beginning to want my tea."

"Tea!" exclaimed Heartall; "why, Sir, *we* have not dined!"

"Whose fault is that, then?" said the 'Squire: "I 'm sure it is not mine. I told you, most particularly, in my letter, that I should dine at four, precisely—I 'm certain I did. Here, Ebenezer, take this key and open the middle door of the under part of the little bookcase in my private room, and in the right-hand corner of the left-hand top drawer you 'll find a book in a parchment cover, lettered on the outside 'Copy-of-Letter Book.' Bring it to me, and lock the door again.—I 'll show you copies of my letters to you all, and you 'll see I 'm right."

"My dear Dribble," said Worthington, "you may spare Mr. Ebenezer that trouble. The fault is neither yours nor ours; but some impediments in the City, together with the fog——"

"Well," said Dribble, "all I desire is that you should be satisfied it is no fault of mine that you have lost your dinner. But did you take *nothing* by the way?"

"Oh, yes," said Worthington, "we took a sandwich."

"Well, then," rejoined the 'Squire, "you won't have much." This he uttered with a chuckle of delight, evidently at the consequent escape of his larder. "However," he continued, "we'll do the best for you, under the circumstances: instead of supping at ten we'll order supper to be served at a quarter before."

"To speak the truth, Mr. Dribble," said Heartall, "I am exceedingly hungry, and, I believe, so are my travelling companions: we have had a very uncomfortable ride, and——"

"Oh, in that case," replied Dribble, "perhaps you'd like something to eat. Well—I'll order tea, for I can't wait any longer for my tea; and Sam shall bring up a slice or two of something cold for you to take with *your* tea. Or—if you would prefer a glass of *ale* with it, say so. Here, Sam; here is the key of the ale-barrel; draw about—let me see—why, two, three of them—aye, draw about two pints, and bring me the key of the barrel again."

"I never drink ale, Sir," said Heartall.

"Nor do I, Sir," said I.

"Oh, don't you?" said the 'Squire. "Why, then, if you prefer *wine* you *can* have it; only I think you would better not spoil your supper. It is fair to tell you we have a hot roast turkey for supper. I'm very fond of a hot roast turkey for my supper—in fact, I always have one for my supper on Christmas-eve."

"Hadn't we better order tea in the drawing-room," said Mrs. Dribble, "and leave the gentlemen to take their dinner quietly in this?"

"Nonsense, Mrs. D.!" angrily exclaimed the 'Squire: "it is no dinner, but a mere snack. Besides, where is the use of lighting a fire in the drawing-room at this time o' night? Pray, madam, don't interfere with my orders." Then, addressing himself to us, he continued: "Perhaps you would like a little hot water up stairs whilst they are putting your *snack* on a *tray*?"

The "*snack* on the *tray*" was particularly emphasized: no doubt, with the humane intention of saving us from the mortification of any disappointment which our own wild expectations of a more profuse collation might otherwise have occasioned.

We readily accepted the offer of the hot water, and Sam was ordered to conduct us to our rooms.

"Stop!" cried our host, as Sam was preparing to marshal us the way; "stop—There is no fire in any of *your* rooms; but as I always like to have a fire in *my own* dressing-room in such horrid weather as this, perhaps you might find it more comfortable to go there."

Admiring this delicate attention on the part of our *considerate* host, we accepted the offer "as amended." As we were about to move forward, Sam nodded and winked at his master, at the same time twitching the sleeve of his fustian jacket. The 'Squire put a key into his hand, accompanying it

with an injunction that he would carefully lock the door, and bring him the key again. On entering the dressing-room this mystery was explained by Sam's unlocking one of his master's wardrobes, and taking from it his own dress livery-coat, which the former always kept under lock and key, and which, upon this occasion, he had forgotten to leave out.

After as comfortable a toilette as the time would admit of, we re-descended to the dining-room—our expectations of a merry Christmas not much enlarged by the manner and circumstances of our reception.

The family were taking their tea; and, on a table in a corner of the room, we found a very inefficient substitute for what ought to have been our dinner; for the 'Squire's directions had been rigidly followed. The repast consisted of nothing more than a few slices of cold boiled veal served on a tray, and (as we had declined his ale) the remains—somewhat less than half—of a bottle of sherry. Worthington's "I hope so," which struck me at the time as being of a very suspicious character, was now shown to deserve the worst we might have thought of it. To despatch such a provision, where the duty of so doing was to be divided amongst three hungry travellers, did not require a very long time; and the moment 'Squire Dribble saw that the last drop was drained from the decanter, he did *not* ask whether it would be agreeable to us to take any more, but

desired Sam to "take *all* those things away and bring a card-table."

As of the eight persons who formed the party, three were visitors, it will naturally be supposed that the 'Squire consulted their pleasure as to what game they would prefer, what stakes they chose to play for, or whether they chose to play at all. But the 'Squire was not accustomed to consult any one's pleasure but his own.

"Come," said he, as he opened the card-box, and began to divide the counters into dozens; "come, we'll have a game of three-card loo: twelve fish for a penny; put in three to begin; and limit the loo to three-pence."

"But, perhaps," said Mrs. Dribble, "those gentlemen may not like cards."

"I did not ask for your 'perhaps,' madam," angrily replied the 'Squire; "I dare say they do. What is Christmas-eve without a round game? Come." And, taking his seat at the table, he dealt the cards round in eight divisions.

Of all imaginable bores, the being compelled to hum-drum for paltry stakes at a speculative game, with people who are intent upon its formalities, and whose spirits are elated, or their ill-temper provoked by their three-farthing gains or losses—of all imaginable bores, this I pronounce to be the bore most capable of boring one's very head off. The only expedient for rendering such a mode of destroying

that unutterable, is that which is usually adopted by the generality of elderly ladies at all games under all circumstances, and by them politely termed "making mistakes"—that is to say—but I say it in confidence—cheating. The 'Squire, however, being a rigid disciplinarian at cards, would not allow this.

On the occasion of some trifling infraction of a rule which I had perpetrated, he gave Nizzy the key [illegible] of the bookcases, and sent him to fetch "Hoyle." [Nizzy, by-the-by, is the familiar appellation of Ebenezer, a poor and humble cousin of the 'Squire's.] Then the 'Squire, who took upon himself the office of collector and paymaster, would count the fish over and over again if, instead of eighty or ninety in the pool, as there ought to have been, he found a deficiency of one,—strictly examining each person at table as to how many he or she had put in—then he would call a fresh deal upon the occurrence of any trifling error; then if one happened to say, "I'll not play this hand," and, in the same breath, retracted and said, "I will," he would tell him he had said "no" first, and must not. If he won a halfpenny he would chuckle and [illegible] with delight; if he lost a farthing he would grumble and swear, scratch his head, and dash the cards upon the table. Well; for nearly two mortal hours were we condemned to this execrable occupation, till Dribble, having won three-and-twopence

(the whole sum that had been lost all round the table), declared it time to leave off.

At about ten o'clock supper was served: this consisted of a hot roast turkey and a dish of sausages. 'Squire Dribble, who officiated as carver, first cut off the liver wing and a slice or two of the breast, which he put upon a plate and kept at his side. This was clearly intended (and the result proved it) for no less important a personage than 'Squire Dribble himself. He then gave the gizzard to Sam, saying, "Let the cook devil this for *me*." Having, with praiseworthy consideration, provided for himself, he politely inquired of his guests what they would choose. His own family were not subjected to that perplexing question—the 'Squire, probably, being well acquainted with their tastes. He had helped everybody at table excepting poor cousin Nizzy, and there remained nothing of the turkey but one leg and the dismantled carcase. Nizzy looked wistfully at the leg.

"Nizzy," said Dribble, in a tone of exemplary kindness, "you admired the boiled veal to-day. Go, Sam, and fetch the veal for Mr. Ebenezer. And, here; let the cook put by this leg for my breakfast in the morning. There is nothing I like so much for my breakfast as a broiled leg of a turkey."

After *no* dinner this was but a scanty supper; and the 'Squire, who, I have no doubt, observed a sly look indicating thus much which Heartall cast at

[illegible] ordered some cheese to be toasted and [illegible] to be poached. He also insisted [illegible] tasting his ale—his very best; and there [illegible] wine on table, nor any, indeed, being [illegible] so. Suddenly his heart expanded, [illegible] exclaimed,

"Come! this is Christmas eve; so if any gentleman would like wine let him say so: *but* WE *never drink it at supper.* Come! what do you say? There is plenty in the cellar, and of all sorts; *and I shan't mind the trouble of going down for it.*"

To such an invitation no reply could well be given; and silence, according to Dribble's interpretation, giving *dissent*, he continued:—

"You agree with me, I perceive: something [illegible] and comfortable is the thing. Sam, as soon as you have removed these things, bring the spirits and plenty of hot water."

The 'Squire "brewed" (as he expressed it) for every one at table, never allowing the bottles to pass from before him.

"Mr. D.," said our hostess, "you have not given [illegible] thing to Niz."

"Well, madam," fiercely replied the 'Squire, "I suppose he has got a tongue in his head, and can ask for something if he wants it.'

"I—I don't care about any thing, thank you, Sir," meekly interposed the poor cousin.

"Come; it is Christmas-eve, so you *must* have

something. Here." And here the 'Squire sent a tumbler of hot water, with a little gin in it, to his well-beloved cousin.

From this moment till the clock struck eleven we were entertained by the 'Squire's talking *at* his lady, about "interfering," and "people troubling their heads," and "who was master in the house," and other such agreeable topics;—the situation of us, the guests, not being made the more agreeable by their effects on the party for whose edification they were intended. Mrs. Dribble—who, by the way, was somewhat her husband's senior, and whom he had espoused for a few thousands which had been bequeathed to her by her former husband—Mrs. Dribble, with tears in her eyes, presently left the room. At a quarter past eleven the 'Squire ordered bed-room candles; at the same time informing us that he was sleepy, as he had sat up a quarter of an hour beyond his usual time for the pleasure of our company.

"Good night, and a merry Christmas!" said the 'Squire, as we retired.

"A merry Christmas!" After so much of it as we had experienced, there was something positively awful in the sound.

To bed. The room allotted to me was commodious. It was prettily decorated, too; though, perhaps, in one respect, with stricter regard to elegance than comfort: for, although the water was freezing in the

which the glass was filled with party-coloured shavings, having rosettes, cut in paper, tastefully stuck here and there amongst them. I felt, shiveringly, that ice would have been an ornament more in keeping with the season; but as it is impossible for the 'Squire himself to sleep in more than one room at a time, it would have been preposterous to expect that he should have provided so expensive a luxury in any one where he did not, and where, consequently, it could in no manner contribute to his own enjoyment. Owing partly to the cold, and partly to my own thoughts, which involuntarily dwelt on the pleasant morrow before us, it was far in the night before I could sleep.

Next morning,—Christmas-day morn!—I was disturbed by the 'Squire, who knocked loudly at my door. I just ventured my nose from under the bedclothes, and, so intense was the cold, I felt as if it had been caught in a vice.

"Not stirring yet, Sir!" cried the 'Squire. "Why, Sir, it is almost nine; I have been up this hour, and want my breakfast; I always breakfast at nine."

"Then, pray, Sir," said I, with an unaffected yawn, "pray get your breakfast and don't wait for me. This is much earlier than my usual hour of rising. Besides, I have not slept well, and there is nothing peculiarly inviting in the weather. I will take some breakfast an hour or two hence."

"*Pray* get up, my dear sir, and come down stairs, or the rolls will be cold; and I can't bear cold rolls. Now *do* get up: I hate—that 's to say, Mrs. D. hates to see breakfast about all day long; and" (continued my kind-hearted, considerate host) "you would find it very uncomfortable to take breakfast in your own room *without a fire*—for it is a bitter cold morning. I 'll tell Sam to bring you some hot water."

Away he went; and not long after came Sam with hot water—Sam informing me that his master (polite creature!) had instructed him to say, that he could not be so rude as to sit down to breakfast till I came—*nor could the ladies*. This hint was, of course, decisive: so, greatly to my dissatisfaction, I arose; and (having dressed with as much speed as the discomforts of my position would allow), with a blue nose, shrivelled cheek, and shivering from head to foot, I descended to the breakfast-parlour.

Scarcely had I time to salute the assembled party when I was thus addressed by the 'Squire:—

"A late riser, eh, sir? We have nearly finished breakfast, but no fault of mine. You know I called you in time, and I told you I wanted my breakfast. You must be earlier to-morrow, though, as you 'll start at eleven. But, come, my dear sir; what do you take? I 'm afraid I can't recommend the tea, but I 'll put a little fresh into the pot if you wish it. However, here is plenty of coffee, and" (putting his fingers to the coffee-biggin) "it 's nice and warm

[illegible] was all gone, but you can have one [illegible] for you, if you like—or, what say [illegible] of the cold veal? I believe you found [illegible], yesterday? *I* should have made my [illegible] of it, if I had not had my broiled leg of the [illegible] had just finished eating it as Mr. Wor[illegible] and Mr. Heartall came down: for they [illegible] rather late-ish like yourself."

[illegible]ing as I was, this was no time for the exer[illegible] overstrained delicacy, which would have [illegible] upon me cold veal and cool coffee; so I re[illegible] to have some hot tea and an egg.

"[illegible] bring me the tea-caddy again, Sam," said [illegible] Dribble, somewhat peevishly; "and here, [illegible] the key and get an egg out of the cupboard—[illegible] and let them be boiled. Be sure you lock [illegible] cupboard again, and bring me the key. And, [illegible] come back. Put a ticket into the basket for [illegible] eggs you take out, or I may make a mistake [illegible] egg account."

[illegible] 'Squire made some fresh tea, and, in due time, [illegible] it out for me; for 'Squire Dribble gallantly [illegible] his lady from the performance of all the oner[illegible] and unfeminine duties of the breakfast table—[illegible] making and pouring out the tea, serving the [illegible] and cream, distributing the eggs, and doling out [illegible] portions of whatever else there might happen to [illegible] by taking them upon himself.

[illegible] Sam returned with the eggs, he brought

along with him the newspaper, which had just arrived.

"Give that to me," said Dribble, who had not quite finished his breakfast. So, taking it from the hands of the servant, he, without offering it to any one else, put it beneath him, and sat hatching it till he himself had leisure to read it.

"It is an odd fancy of mine," said the 'Squire; "but I would not give a farthing for my newspaper unless I see the first of it." This was a reason sufficient to reconcile the most fastidious to the proceeding.

For our morning's amusements we had the choice of admiring Mrs. Dribble's proficiency in the art of netting purses; of looking at Miss Flanks, who sat silently looking at the fire; of listening to her brother and Nizzy, who were scraping duets on two bad fiddles; of walking out in the snow, along with the 'Squire, to look at the grounds; or of accompanying him to the farm-yard to see him feed his pigs, count his chickens, and gather in the eggs. The 'Squire pressed us hard for the two latter, saying that it was by no means agreeable to be obliged to walk out alone when he had invited company from town to enliven his Christmas. This, however, Heartall and I resolutely declined; but Worthington, who was fearful of putting his pet bear entirely out of humour, acceded to it. Left to ourselves, we went into the library. There was no fire in it, and all the book-

cases were locked up. There was a billiard-table in the house; "But," said Sam, who had informed us of that promising fact, "there 's no fire in the room; the balls, cues, and maces, are all locked up, and the 'Squire has got the key."

We were driven to our wit's end for amusement; and when, after twenty other inquiries, Heartall said, "And pray, Sam, where is the ——?" Sam, somewhat petulantly, replied,—"Lord bless you, sir! *that 's* locked up, too: the Squire locks up every thing here."

The morning wore slowly away; and at length we retired to our cold rooms to dress for dinner. From thence we came down into the drawing-room, which was still colder; for the apartment was spacious and lofty, with French windows opening to the lawn; and the fire had but that moment been lighted.

"It is useless to have much fire till one wants it," said the 'Squire. "As dinner will soon be ready, we shan't be here long; and when we return here in the evening, it will be cozy and comfortable."

We had stood shivering here for half an hour when dinner was announced.

The dinner consisted of soup and *bouilli*, beef-steaks, a beef-steak pie, a boiled round of beef, and a fine sirloin of beef roasted. The 'Squire accounted for this extraordinary bill-of-fare by explaining to us that *he* was extremely fond of beef: that by purchasing the quantity he had got it a bargain; and

that, one way or other—by coaxing and cutting and contriving—his Christmas dinner would serve his family nearly through the week. The wines, for the little there was of them, were good; and one bottle especially, which the 'Squire kept at his side, and of which he sent each of us, his visitors, one glass, was excellent.

The cloth had not been long removed, when Dribble, having finished his own bottle (and the rest of the decanters being nearly emptied), fell fast asleep—or pretended to do so. After some time he started up, and apologized for his rudeness in keeping us so long *waiting for coffee*.

This evening passed away in nearly the same lively style as the preceding: the principal variation being the substitution of *vingt-un* for loo. When the clock struck ten, the 'Squire, with ineffable hospitality, said,—

"If either of you, gentlemen, would like supper, pray say so—I don't want any myself."

Supper being declined, "Well, then, as you must be up early in the morning to start," continued the 'Squire, "suppose we go to bed. I feel uncommonly sleepy."

"At 11 A.M. of the 26th," the precise time which the 'Squire, in his letter of invitation, had fixed for our departure, the carriage was announced; and within five minutes of this blessed moment we had passed the boundaries of the 'Squire's domain. For

[illegible] we rode on in silence. Worthington, [illegible] was conscious that his pet bear had [illegible] to the genteelest of tunes," at length [illegible] (though more in the tone of a timid question than a bold assertion) to say—

"We have—ahem!—we have passed a *tolerably* pleasant Christmas—*on the whole.*"

Heartill, unable to resist this, burst into a hearty laugh; and quoting the old song, exclaimed, "Why, considering that—'Christmas comes but once a year.'"

"And that would be exactly once too often," said he, "if one were to be kidnapped, as I have been, and inveigled down to share in its customary FESTIVITIES AT DRIBBLE HALL."

SECRETS IN ALL TRADES.

A SKETCH.

It was nearly two years since I had last paid a visit to a favourite summer retreat of mine—the **** inn (As the character I am about to introduce is a real, existing personage, I must be allowed this slight touch of mysteriousness) — on the road between London and Cambridge. The rooms I usually occupied overlooked a spacious lawn and shrubbery at the back part of the house, bounded by an amphitheatre of rising ground, well wooded with firs and other sheltering trees; so that, for all the purposes of quiet and seclusion, I was as well circumstanced in this public inn, as I could have been in the most private dwelling in the most remote corner of England. In addition to this advantage, my frequent visits had familiarized me with all the great dignitaries of the establishment,—meaning thereby, Burley (the landlord) and his wife; Tim, the head-waiter; and Patty

fair, the head chambermaid,—I was therefore always sure of the best rooms, the best attendance, the best-aired bed, and the best wine—yes, certainly, the *best* wine—the house could supply. With respect to the last commodity, I must admit that I never tried my friend Burley's cellar more than twice; for finding that his "best port," and his "other port," and his "different sort of port," and his sherry, and Madeira, and claret, and burgundy, and champagne, were alike detestable, I always pleaded the orders of my physician, and took refuge in negus or cold punch. Well; the other morning, the fineness of the weather acting powerfully in concert with the first cockney attack of the season—a longing to look at green trees—I bethought me of the *** inn, jumped into a Cambridge coach, and in little more than two hours found myself within two miles of my place of destination. Here the coach stopped to lunch; and of the time allowed for the performance of that operation I intended to avail myself, in order to examine the literary treasures of the churchyard, which was invitingly situated on the opposite side of the road.

Accordingly had I entered this silent city of the dead, when I perceived, on an elevated tomb, at a short distance before me, a man reading a newspaper! He was in the reclining attitude of a river-god. The instant he saw me he leaped from his pedestal, and, with many a low bow, approached me. He

was a short, round person, with a good-humoured red face, and an eye twinkling and blinking with a sort of grave drollery. His light hair was combed smoothly over his forehead; and, to complete the portrait, I must add, that he wore a straw hat, a pepper-and-salt coat, white waistcoat, yellow silk neckerchief, brown corded breeches, and top-boots. It was no other than my friend Burley himself.

After a brief interchange of expressions of astonishment at our meeting in such a place, I told him I was going on to pass a few days with him at the ****.

"Why, bless my soul, Sir!—don't you know, Sir?—I've left business these six months, Sir! Realized enough for me and Mrs. B. to live upon—we have no chicks, you know, Sir; made over the concern to Tim, who has married Patty Ash,—a relation of Mrs. B.'s—and bought a cottage just off the road here, Sir. No, no, Sir; if I were still in business, you wouldn't see me taking my pleasure on a tombstone at this time of day, Sir." And, as was usual with him, he accompanied each "Sir" with a low bow.

"I congratulate you on your retirement, Burley. But you must have had a windfall, or made some lucky hits in other ways than trade; for you hadn't been many years in possession of the * * * *."

"No, Sir; all plain sailing, I assure you, Sir; merely minding my Ps and Qs; and above all, Sir, *my—system—Sir:* the double L. B.s!"

[illegible] Long Bills, Sir.—Long Bills, Sir. Yes [illegible] of its value, Sir; but I know it [illegible], Sir. Make a gentleman a very low [illegible] give him a rather longish bill, and [illegible] satisfied as if you took off twenty per [illegible] don't mind letting you into the secret, [illegible] 'm out of the concern; because you were [illegible] patron of mine, Sir, and because I know [illegible] sort of inquirer into what we may call [illegible], Sir;—eh, Sir?"

"Thank you for your confidence, Burley. But pray, [illegible] to the obligation by informing me upon [illegible] point. Although the service and accommodations of your house were generally unexceptionable, how was it you could command any custom at all, considering that your wines were, to say [illegible] of them, execrable?"

"Execrable, my soul!—dear me, Sir! Well, that's [illegible]! Why, Sir, I seldom had any complaints about my wines; I assure you, Sir, my wines [illegible] general satisfaction—*especially to the young gentlemen from Cambridge, Sir.*" And, as with comical [illegible] he said this, he made a bow much lower [illegible]

"But I can't deny it, Burley: your wines, of all [illegible] were detestable—port, Madeira, claret, champagne [illegible]—"

"There, now, Sir! to prove how much gentlemen may be mistaken; I assure you, Sir, as I'm an honest man, I never had but two sorts of wine in my cellar—port and sherry."

"How! when I myself have tried your claret, your ——"

"Yes, Sir—*my* claret, Sir. One is obliged to give gentlemen everything they ask for, Sir; gentlemen who pay their money, Sir, have a right to be served with whatever they may please to order, Sir,—especially the young gentlemen from Cambridge, Sir. I'll tell you how it was, Sir. I never would have any wines in my house, Sir, but port and sherry, because *I knew them* to be wholesome wines, Sir; and this I will say, Sir, my port and sherry were *the—very—best* I could procure in all England——"

"How! the *best?*"

"Yes, Sir—*at the price I paid for them.* But to explain the thing at once, Sir. You must know, Sir, that I hadn't been long in business when I discovered that gentlemen know very little about wine; but that if they did'nt find some fault or other they would appear to know much less,—always excepting the young gentlemen from Cambridge, Sir; *and they are excellent judges!*" [And here again Burley's little eyes twinkled a humorous commentary on the concluding words of his sentence.] "Well, Sir; with respect to my dinner wines, I was always tolerably

[illegible] seldom find fault at dinner; so [illegible] might happen to be Madeira, or pale [illegible]."

"Why, just now, you told me you had but two [illegible] in your cellar."

"Very true, Sir; port *and* sherry. But this was [illegible] Sir. If any one ordered Madeira:—From [illegible] of sherry take two glasses of wine, which [illegible] by two glasses of brandy, and add thereto a [illegible] squeeze of lemon; and this I found to give [illegible] satisfaction,—especially to the young gentle- [illegible] from Cambridge, Sir. But, upon the word of [illegible] man, I could scarcely get a living profit [illegible] Madeira, Sir, for I always used the best [illegible]. As to the pale and brown sherry, Sir—a [illegible] of glasses of nice pure water, in place of the [illegible] quantity of wine, made what I used to call *my* [illegible] *pale* (by-the-by, a squeeze of lemon added [illegible] made a very fair Bucellas, Sir—a wine not [illegible] called for now, Sir;) and for my old *brown* [illegible] a *little* burnt sugar was the thing. It looked [illegible] much like sherry that had been twice to the [illegible] Indies, Sir; and, indeed, to my customers who [illegible] *very* particular about their wines, I used to [illegible] it as such."

"But, Mr. Burley, wasn't such a proceeding of a [illegible] rather——?"

"I guess what you would say, Sir; but I knew it [illegible] a wholesome wine at bottom, Sir. But my

port was the wine which gave me the most trouble. Gentlemen seldom agree about port, Sir. One gentleman would say, 'Burley, I don't like this wine—it is too heavy!'—'Is it, Sir? I think I can find you a lighter.' *Out* went a glass of wine, and *in* went a glass of water. 'Well, Sir,' I'd say, 'how do you approve of *that?*'—'Why—um—no; I can't say —' 'I understand, Sir, you like an *older* wine—*softer:* I think I can please you, Sir.'—Pump again, Sir.—'Now, Sir,' says I (wiping the decanter with a napkin, and triumphantly holding it up to the light), 'try this, if you please.'—'That 's it, Burley—that 's the very wine: bring another bottle of the same.'—But one can't please everybody the same way, Sir. Some gentlemen would complain of my port as being poor—without body. In went *one* glass of brandy. If that didn't answer, 'Aye, gentlemen,' says I, 'I know what will please you—you like a fuller bodied, rougher wine.' Out went *two* glasses of wine, and in went *two* or *three* glasses of brandy. This used to be a *very* favourite wine—but *only* with the young gentlemen from Cambridge, Sir."

"And your claret?"

"My good, wholesome port again, Sir. Three wines out, three waters in, one pinch of tartaric acid, two ditto orris-powder. For a fuller claret, a little brandy; for a lighter claret, more water."

"But how did you contrive about Burgundy?"

claret, Sir, with from three to six drops of bergamot, according as gentlemen liked a full flavour or a delicate flavour. As for champagne, Sir, that, *of course*, I made myself."

"How do you mean 'of course,' Burley?"

"Lord, Sir," said he, with an innocent, yet waggish look; "surely everybody makes his own champagne—else *what* CAN *become of all the goose-berries?*"

JOB'S COMFORTERS.

SAM SCALPEL.—PETER FESTER.—TOM TOOGOOD.

THE Art of Administering Consolation would seem to be both easy and agreeable, were we to form our opinion of it from the vast number of its professors, and the pleasure they appear to derive from its exercise. Perhaps, however, there is none that in its application requires greater tact and delicacy, or that is, at the same time, more painful to the feelings of the sincere and conscientious ministerer. For the severest calamities incident to human-kind being also the most common, the topics of comfort proper to them, few in themselves, are, consequently, trite. To render these effective, therefore, extreme nicety of handling is requisite on the part of the consolator; and, from the difficulty of the undertaking, well indeed is it for him if he do not aggravate, when

to alleviate, the grief of the

lest I should be suspected of an attempt to perpetrate a moral essay, I at once declare that my business is not with the "sincere and conscientious" ministers of comfort, who, in pureness of spirit, and the sacrifice of his own pleasure or convenience, visits the house of mourning with the devout hope that his voice may mitigate, if not dispel, its gloom; with him who is as ready to stretch forth his hand to relieve the unfortunate as to exercise his tongue in deploring the misfortune. No! I have to do, merely, with that numerous class of importunate meddlers who are comprehended under the term of Sad's Comforters; who look out for sufferings of others, from a first-rate calamity down to a petty vexation, with a feeling akin to that which excites many people to attend executions; who, without sympathy, but pretending to console, will, with ill-bred curiosity, probe a grief to the quick; who, if they cannot discover, will, like barbarous drovers, "make a raw," that they may, with more tormenting effect, apply the goad of compassion.

One of the class is Sam Scalpel. Scalpel enjoys the reputation of being one of the tenderest-hearted creatures alive, for, regardless of the pangs it may inflict upon his acute feelings, wherever a scene of real suffering is being, or to be, enacted, there is he sure to be found. In reply to the question, "What was

his *fancy* for thrusting himself into such matters, and frequently on occasions where his presence was neither expected nor desired?" Scalpel exclaimed, —"Fancy!—Thrust!—In this world of pain and tribulation, where so much is to be done by a word of comfort or consolation, one must sacrifice points of etiquette, as well as one's own feelings, to one's duty as a man and a Christian."

This question was put to Scalpel by an acquaintance who met him on his way to Major Dareall's, whither he was bound, on his "duty as a man and a Christian," to offer a few words of comfort and encouragement,—Scalpel having accidentally learnt, that on the morrow the Major was to suffer the amputation of his right leg. The Major was a man of acknowledged bravery, who had faced danger and death in many shapes, and (like Coriolanus) "had wounds to show."

On arriving at the Major's house, Scalpel was dismayed at finding there was no muffle about the knocker. "Then it is all over," thought he; "he is dead, and I am too late." And his heart sank with disappointment.

He knocked at the door, which was opened by the Major's servant, an old soldier who had served with him through the Peninsula.

"Well?" said Scalpel, dolefully.

"Well, sir!" said the servant.

"Then it's all over?" continued Scalpel.

[illegible] inquired the servant.

[illegible] made no reply, but pulled a long, dismal, [illegible] shook his head; at the same time drawing [illegible] across his thigh.

[illegible] Sir; no, Sir; to-morrow at eleven [illegible]," said the servant in a firm, though not [illegible] tone.

Scalpel, then, was not too late, and, for a moment, [illegible] countenance brightened. But it resumed its [illegible] aspect as he said, "I suppose that, *under* [illegible] *circumstances*, I can't see your master?"

"Oh, yes, you can, Sir, if you are a friend of his, or [illegible] business with him; he is on a sofa in the drawing-room," said the man.

"Why, I——however, take my card to the [illegible]," said Scalpel.

Presently the servant returned with his master's [illegible]—that he did not remember the name [illegible] nevertheless, he begged Mr. Scalpel would walk up.

Scalpel, as he entered the drawing-room, took his [illegible] cambric handkerchief from his pocket, and [illegible] face a yard long. He found Major Dareall [illegible] sideways on a sofa, upon which rested the [illegible] right leg, bandaged, whilst the other was [illegible] by a stool. A library table, covered with books and papers, was at his side. The Major was [illegible], and (not a little to Scalpel's astonishment)

laughing heartily. As the latter approached, the Major put down his book and bowed.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the Major, "Mr. Scalpel!—I beg a thousand pardons for not immediately recollecting your name, but now I remember: I believe I had the pleasure of meeting you once at dinner, about a twelvemonth ago, at our friend Sir Hum Drum's. Pray, sit down."

All this the Major uttered in a cheerful tone; greatly to the astonishment, and perhaps a little to the disappointment, of the visitor, who, heaving a sigh, took a seat.

"To what am I indebted for the pleasure of this visit, Mr. Scalpel? Have you business with me?"

"No, Major, I——ahem!" And Scalpel shook his head dolefully.

"Thank 'e, thank 'e; then I am the more obliged to you. A friendly visit is highly acceptable to a poor invalid who cannot get out of his own house," said the Major, in the same cheerful tone.

The word "invalid" was a cue sufficient; so Scalpel drew his cambric handkerchief across his lips, and was preparing to commence the work of consolation, when he was interrupted by the Major's question:—

"Have you ever read this work? Oh, of course, you have, for who has not? 'Don Quixote.' Ha! ha! ha! ha! I am laughing at it for the hundredth

[illegible] ha! ha! ha! This is the work, sir, for [illegible] the dismals."

"[illegible]" thought Scalpel: "that is my cue [illegible]" with another sigh, and, at the same [illegible] drawing down the corners of his mouth, till [illegible] touched the lower part of his jaw, he [illegible]—

"Dismals, indeed! If any man has cause for [illegible] dismals,' as you call it, *you*, Major, in this try-[illegible] position, must——"

"[illegible] how greatly indebted are we to the writer [illegible] agreeable book, Mr. Scalpel, which, like the [illegible] the enchanter, can transport us, as it were, [illegible] of the sphere of actual existence,—not only [illegible] unpleasant recollections of the past, but [illegible] the pressure of the present, and diverting [illegible] thoughts even from pain or sorrow to come!"

[illegible] few words were another cue for the com-[illegible]

"[illegible], Major!" said he, with a sigh, "we ought [illegible] to be truly grateful for comfort or consolation [illegible] hope; for anything that, as you say, tends [illegible] divert our thoughts from——ahem!——Eleven [illegible] to-morrow is the time appointed, I believe?" [illegible] question he accompanied with a mournful [illegible] of the head.

"Yes," replied the Major. "By-the-by, have [illegible] seen our friend, Sir Hum, lately?"

[illegible] Scalpel was too busily occupied in sighing

and shaking his head to reply to the inquiry, and the Major continued:—

"I wonder I have not had a visit from him, for surely he must know that I am keeping house."

"I wonder at it too!" exclaimed Scalpel. "Ah, Major! An occasion like this ought to bring your friends about you; for when one considers what you will have to go through to-morrow ——"

"It will not be very comfortable, I dare say," said the Major; "but" (continued he, in a tone slightly indicative of impatience, whilst he made a trifling change in the position of his leg on the sofa) —"but it is always time enough, Sir, to think of such things when the hour arrives."

"Comfortable!" exclaimed Scalpel; "comfortable! Can you, my dear Major, conceive me so destitute, so *utterly* destitute of feeling as to suppose that it *will* be? I know the contrary:—horrid!—dreadful! The moment I was told that you were to have your leg taken off, and at the thick part of the thigh, too,—though I might have been misinformed as to that point,—Heaven knows! I hope I was—eh?——"

The Major made no reply, but set his teeth, and rapidly turned over the leaves of the volume of "Don Quixote" which lay before him; whilst Scalpel continued:—

"Ah! It is so then, and I feel for you, my dear Major; for, as I was going to say, the moment I

[illegible] I referred to the article [illegible] in the Encyclopedia, and read it [illegible] with the deepest attention. It was painful [illegible] for I shuddered at every line as I [illegible] of you; but as I did hope that I might [illegible] something of a consolatory nature for you, [illegible] remembered that it is one's duty, as a man and [illegible], to sacrifice one's own feelings for even [illegible] of comforting a friend."

[illegible] the speaker again sighed, and shook his [illegible] dolefully.

[illegible] was a pause of a minute or two, during which Major Dareall, in rather a marked manner, [illegible] his watch three or four times from the table, [illegible] looked at it. At length the silence was broken by Scalpel.

"Of course, Major, *you* have read it."

"No, Sir; no, Sir;" replied the Major, hastily; "I dare say I shall know enough about it without either the trouble of reading it, or the annoyance of hearing of it. And now Mr. ——, Mr. ——. You will pardon my forgetting your name, never having seen you but once before——Oh! Scalpel. And now, Mr. Scalpel, have you anything further to say to me?"

With these words the Major again looked at his watch.

"No, Major," replied Scalpel; "nothing, except to exhort you to summon up all your fortitude to go

through it. Ah! you will have need of it.—Ahem! —May I ask the name of the surgeon who is to operate?"

"Sir Donald Slash," replied the Major, covering his eyes with his hand.

"Slash! I'm glad of it: he is said to be a fine operator, though he has no more feeling at his work than a tinker, and will saw through a bone with as much indifference as a carpenter does through a senseless plank. In fact, very few of them have feeling: cutting off a leg in the morning, or carving a chicken in the evening, is pretty much the same thing to them."

The Major turned deadly pale, and swallowed a glass of water, which he filled from a jug that stood on the table.

"I am afraid you are unwell, Major," said Scalpel; "can I do anything for you? If I can, I shall consider it a duty, under your present trying circumstances, to——"

"You can, Sir," replied the Major: "do me the favour to ring the bell."

Scalpel rang the bell, and the Major's servant entered the room.

"Samson," said the Major, "this gentleman is going. Good morning, Mr. Scalpel."

"Now, my dear Major," said Scalpel, "that what you have to go through you will bear like a man, I cannot doubt; but let me intreat you to dismiss it

[illegible] till the time comes. That will [illegible] enough to think about it, as you say, Heaven knows! I suppose it will be all over by about [illegible] o'clock, or half-past—that's some comfort—and I will call and inquire how you got through it. [illegible] months you will be as well as ever, provided Sir Donald is careful to make you a good [illegible]—though I am sorry to find, from the article in the Encyclopædia, that surgeons are not always so [illegible] upon that point as they ought to be; and though a wooden leg is not so good as one's own, yet it is better than none—and that's another comfort for you. Farewell! Heaven bless you, my dear Major! Keep up your spirits, for I am sure you have need of them."

Saying which Mr. Scalpel put his handkerchief to his eyes, emitted the customary sighs, slowly shook his head, and quitted the room. As he descended the stairs he said to Samson:—

"Ah! visits of this nature are very trying to one's feelings; but it is one's duty, as a man and as a Christian, to offer all the consolation in one's power to the sick and the suffering."

"Samson," said the Major to his servant (who as soon as he had closed the door on the comforter returned to the drawing-room), "let me never see the face of that infernal fellow again. I had prepared myself for Sir Donald Slash, and, even as it is, I trust I shall face him becomingly; but I am

satisfied that another dose of that fellow's d—d *comfort* would unman me."

Another of the class is PETER FESTER. Peter meddles not with the graver and greater calamities of life: he limits the exercise of his consolatory talents to cases of petty vexation and trifling annoyance. These, as they are of more frequent occurrence, afford Peter more numerous opportunities for the display of his powers. But bountiful as is this wicked world in its supply of care and trouble, it will sometimes happen that the supply is inadequate to the demand of so industrious a comforter as Peter; and it is upon such occasions that his ingenuity in his vocation is most advantageously shown. His active mind abhors repose, as Nature is said to abhor a vacuum; and if he cannot find a grievance upon which to pour his phials of comfort, he will make one. Peter Fester's *forte*, indeed, (to repeat a phrase already adopted rather for its expressiveness than its elegance,) lies in "establishing a *raw*;" and, this done, he will touch it with the hand, or, rather it should be said, the finger of a master. He will seek and find some friend happy in the stupid unconsciousness of anything likely to occasion him a moment's uneasiness, and, at the end of one quarter of an hour, leave him discontented and restless with a vague sense of injury or injustice, or an undefined apprehension of evil; and smarting in every nerve

[illegible] process. As, [illegible] has lately been called to the Bar. Having little else to do, it is Mr. Gabbling's intention to offer himself, on the Radical interest, as candidate at the next vacancy for the representation of the ancient and respectable town of Swineford. This is likely soon to occur, as Mr. Brawhell, the present Radical member, is to be appointed one of the ten commissioners (at a salary of 2000*l.* a year) for the regulation and superintendence of mile-stones on the several roads from London to Brighton:—such commission having been declared indispensable to the welfare of the empire, by the friends of the hard-working friends to the cause of Economy and Reform. Not along ago Gabbling went down to Swineford, where, at a leg-of-mutton-and-trimmings feast, given at the Cock and Bull, by two hundred of the most respectable of the "party," to their independent and disinterested representative (the commissioner that is to be), he addressed them in a speech which he had no reason to believe had produced the most desirable effect for his purpose. How, indeed, could it fail, when retrenchment and reform were the small-faced benefits it promised, and when it concluded with an assurance that, should he ever be elevated to the dignified position of representing the Swineford-ians in Parliament, no circumstance in life should

induce him to relinquish it—unless, indeed, the duty which he owed to his country should call upon him—as it had done to his illustrious friend—to undertake the superintendence of mile-stones.

Two or three days after Gabble's return, Fester paid him a visit at his chambers. He found the learned barrister playing the flute, and happy.

"So," said Fester, taking possession of an easy chair; "So, my dear boy, you made a fine speech at Swineford the other day?"

"Pshaw!" replied Gabble, with affected indifference (though Fester knew well enough that a notion of the excellence of his oratory was Gabble's tender point); "Pshaw! there was nothing in it."

"Come, come," said Fester, "it was a fine speech—a very fine speech—you know it was."

"Well," replied Gabble, "it is not for me to express an opinion of it, but I believe—I *think* it produced an effect; and, vanity apart, I will say it was the best speech I ever made in my life. To tell you the truth, Fester, I threw all my power into that speech, because I knew that a great deal would be expected from it in a certain quarter not a hundred miles from Downing-street."

"You were right," said Fester, "for politics must be *your* mark. You are not likely to do much in your profession."

"Begging your pardon, my dear fellow, I flatter myself that——"

[illegible], Gabble; I don't say [illegible]—I say you won't do [illegible] you must stick to politics, and *you* [illegible]. I know what you mean by your [illegible] Downing-street. You have great friends [illegible] great friends. They expect a great deal [illegible] now, I know they do. But, for your [illegible] *of* any service to you—any *real* service [illegible] it to be reported in the London papers?"

"Why," replied Gabble, "the Conservatives, of [illegible], won't notice it: I was too hard upon *them*; [illegible] doubt our own side——"

"Oh, that's where you are mistaken. The Conservatives, and the Conservatives only, will notice it." Gabble looked at him with astonishment, and [illegible] a pause.

"And so," continued Fester, "the Downing-street [illegible] were anxious about your speech at Swineford? [illegible] to be taken as a trial speech—a specimen of [illegible] might be expected from you!"

"Why—why—well—yes," stammered Gabble; "but then?"

"Then!—Have you had any quarrel with the [illegible] of the 'Swineford Radical Dictator?'"

"I don't even know him," replied Gabble.

"Then *didn't* you break down?" inquired Fester.

"Break down!" exclaimed Demosthenes; "why, [illegible] for upwards of two hours, right on, without [illegible] of a moment!"

"Then you did *not* break down!—D——n him!"

"Why, who the plague says I did?" asked Gabble, impatiently, and with some appearance of alarm.

"Now don't let such a trifle annoy you, my dear friend," said Fester, in a soft, soothing tone; "who cares what is said by an obscure provincial paper like the 'Swineford Radical Dictator?' Nobody reads it—that is to say, not many—not a *great* many read it—in London, I mean; and that's some consolation for you. But Gabble—I am afraid it has a large circulation in its own county—eh?"

"D——n the 'Radical Dictator!'" exclaimed Gabble in a rage; "break down, indeed! why, from the first words I uttered, till——"

"Now, why do you allow such a trifling matter to disturb you? Come, think no more about it, but play me a tune on the flute."

"Confound the flute! Is this a time to——? Why, my dear Fester, you must be aware that such a statement—made by one of our own party, too—is calculated to do me serious injury. I can be of no service to the big-wigs here, save by my oratorical powers; and, should I be thought wanting on that point, of course they'll throw me over. Break down, indeed!" And here Gabble paced up and down the room, perspiring at every pore.

"Now, be cool, my dear boy. Nothing that such a paper says can do you any harm; and there's consolation for you. But the awkward part of the

affair, for then the Conservative press may make a handle of it; and if *they* should notice your mishap, why—"

"Mishap!" cried Gabble; "Plague on you! what do you mean by my mishap, when I have told you that—"

"I know, I know," said Fester, in his most comforting tone; "you didn't fail—you couldn't; but if the 'Standard' of this evening should say you did—though as I haven't seen it yet, I can't say that it will—and the 'Times' to-morrow, and the 'Herald,' and the 'Post,' why then, indeed, you would be in a bad way. And then, some of those abominable Sunday papers—they would quiz your very soul out. But, perhaps, the matter *may* pass unnoticed; and that's some comfort for you."

"I'll go immediately to my friend Lord Blunderton, and explain the whole business to him," cried Gabble.

"Now, why need you be in a fever about it?" said Fester. "Even take it at the worst, you have a fine profession to fall back upon, and that consideration ought to be a great consolation to you."

"Why, just now you told me I never should do much in it," cried Gabble, impatiently.

"Comparatively, I meant; comparatively, my dear boy," said Fester. "Besides, what else *can* you do? If you fail in politics—and that's a very desperate line for a young man to engage in—*very*

—why, you must needs stick to law. It is a fine profession—very fine! Greatly overstocked, to be sure; prodigiously! As an attorney of the greatest practice in London told me the other day—a man who knows well what he says—there are ninety-nine barristers for one brief. It is but a poor look-out, certainly; and yet men do *sometimes* make their way to the Bench or the Woolsack, so there's comfort in *that* for you."

So Peter Fester, having comforted his friend into a broiling fever, took his leave.

Another variety of the class of Job's Comforters is Tom Toogood. Tom is a widower of five-and-forty. He is in possession of a clear two thousand a year; and having no children, nor (so far as his most intimate friends have ever been able to discover) any relations to share his income with him, and his own personal expenses being apparently small, Tom is suspected of charity. He has the character of being one of the kindest-hearted creatures alive; one who would go through fire and water to do a service. It is generally said of him, in the common phrase, that "the good he does is unknown!" and so ingeniously has he contrived to conceal his benevolence, that, for my own part, I never heard a charge of a liberal action fairly brought home to him. He "does good by stealth," it would seem, and "would blush to find it fame;"

an opportunity of to the blush? But if the substantial upon the unso dexterously administered as entirely to detection, he is done careful to conceal his donations of pity and advice, and of that kind of consolation which places him in the Job's comforters.

informed that a friend of his was ruined failure of a speculation in hops. "You shock exclaimed Tom. "Poor unfortunate devil! heart bleeds for him. But it is his own fault: had he taken my advice this would not have That he'll acknowledge, poor devil! I'm sure he will. I'll go at once and say what I comfort him."

"The kind-hearted creature!" exclaimed his in-

brother of his friends was thrown from a hack- by which accident three of his ribs and a leg broken. "Poor unlucky dog!" said Tom; grieved to the very soul for him. I always him something of the kind would happen if he to use those cabs—I'll go to him; though, scenes of this kind are very distressing

"What a compassionate soul is Tom Too-

let us follow him to where something more

available than pity and advice was required at his hands.

Widow Workman rented of Toogood a small house at Hammersmith, where, by carrying on a little business as a miliner, she contrived to support herself and five children. The house was burnt down, and her furniture and small stock in trade, which were uninsured, were destroyed. No sooner did Toogood hear of the calamity than he hastened to the lodging where the poor woman had taken refuge. Toogood had insured the building to the full amount of its value, so that he himself was secure from loss.

"This is a sad piece of business for you, Mrs. Workman."

"Dreadful, dreadful, Sir!" said the poor widow, weeping and wringing her hands. "All gone, all gone—furniture, clothes, stock, all, all, all!"

"But how very imprudent of you not to insure! If you had followed my advice and insured your property all would have been well again."

"I did, I did, Sir; but I forgot to renew the policy."

"That was very negligent, my good Mrs. Workman. How often have I advised you to be careful about your insurance! How much had you been insured for?"

"Two hundred pounds, Sir."

"Bless my soul! Now you see the consequence

[illegible] Had you renewed your policy you [illegible] have had two hundred pounds to set you [illegible] again. But, come; let us see what can be [illegible] you. I have come all the way from town [illegible] each step of it, and was caught in the [illegible] have come on purpose to talk to you."

"Sir! you are an angel from heaven! You [illegible] too good for this world!" said the poor woman, [illegible] countenance brightened by a ray of hope.

"In this world of sorrow we must do what we [illegible] each other, Mrs. Workman. But tell me, [illegible] good soul, what is it you propose doing?"

"God only knows, Sir, unless some friend will [illegible] me."

"If you had but renewed your insurance you would have been in no need of a friend's assistance, [illegible] creature," said Toogood, in a tone of surprising kindness. "But have you *no* project?"

"Why, yes, Sir; I have been thinking that with [illegible] pounds I might stock a stall at the bazaar."

"Do it, do it, Mrs. Workman; I will go and inquire if there is one to let. We must not consider [illegible] in cases like this."

"But I have not got twenty pounds, Sir, and —" The poor woman hesitated.

"But, surely, you have some friend who will lend you twenty pounds. An industrious widow with five children has a fair claim for such assistance, God knows."

"I have no friend who can spare the money, Sir; but I have been thinking that—I say, Sir—that—as I have been your tenant nine years—and—and as you are a very rich man, Mr. Toogood ——"

"Ah! Mrs. Workman," said the kind-hearted creature—"I 'm sure if I had it in my power to serve you in that way, I would; but you have no notion of the claims I have upon me—the deal of money I am obliged to give! But, come; think again. Have you *no* friend?"

The poor creature wrung her hands and disconsolately shook her head.

"Now, you see how it is, my dear woman! If you had but followed my advice and taken care of your insurance!——But do you absolutely want so much as twenty pounds?"

"Why, Sir, to do the thing tolerably, I should; but perhaps I might contrive to begin with fifteen, or even ten."

"Well, then, Mrs. Workman, you may consider the matter as settled; for, doubtless, you can find some friend who will lend you *ten* pounds."

"No, no, no, no, no," cried the widow, in an agony of tears.

"Ah! Mrs. Workman," said Toogood; "I wish it were in my power to lend you the money, for really my heart bleeds for you. But, let me see: I 'll tell you what I 'll do for you. I am aware that an application of this nature must be painful to your feelings; so

do you turn it over in your mind and let me know who you think would be likely to lend you the ten pounds, and I will go myself—hail, rain, or snow—and speak to him for you. I'll go to the world's end after him; I'll raise heaven and earth, but I'll make him lend you the money, Ah! if you had but renewed your insurance! But it is useless to talk of what is past. When you are again set up in business, mind you insure. And I'll tell you what I'll do for you, my good woman: you shall give *me* the insurance-money, and I'll go myself for you and see that the policy is properly made out. God bless you, my dear soul! keep up your spirits; I am sure you'll have need of them. Now be sure you let me know when you have thought of some friend I may apply to on your behalf. Ah! if you had but renewed your insurance!"

He left the house, and as the door closed on him, he exclaimed, "Ah! poor devil! I'm sure my heart bleeds for her."

Is not Tom Toogood really the kindest-hearted creature alive? And surely, "the good he does *is* oft-times."

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN PARIS.

New Year's Day is the day best suited to universal holiday of any of the three hundred and sixty-five. It is the period of the regeneration of the Calendar in the most interesting parts of the civilized world. Persons of all ranks and occupations take an interest in it. It is the beginning of a new era. We have made up our accounts of happiness and sorrow with the old year: we have struck the moral balance, calculated the profit and loss, and taken stock as a trader does of his goods: we turn over a new leaf: we enter upon a fresh series of transactions; and the common maxim, "As is the beginning so shall be the ending," disposes us to enter upon it joyfully. It is a day of peace-making. Family quarrels are adjusted, broken intimacies repaired, severed friendships reunited; and many a one who would reject an overture of reconciliation on the second of March,

would make no scruple of being the foremost to propose it on the first of January: the season levels all the distinctions of etiquette which usually restrain the better impulses of the heart. These are among its positive advantages over all the other days of the year: it possesses many negative ones derived from their inefficiencies for holiday-making in its complete sense.

CHRISTMAS DAY, notwithstanding its gambols, turkeys, and plum-puddings, is of somewhat too serious a character for the purpose; besides that it suggests ideas of tradesmen's bills. Michaelmas, indeed, is hallowed by the roasting of geese, and, which is still better, the eating of them; but then the 29th of September is *Quarter-Day!* As for Lady-Day and Midsummer—Midsummer duck-and-green-peas is mere affectation, the impotent struggle of would-be holiday—they owe their prominence in the almanack purely to the invention of rent and taxes, and impudently stand forth as claimants on our purses, without even a decent attempt to render their approach less unwelcome, by affording us a pretext for merry-making: they are a couple of surly tax-gatherers. Easter and Whitsuntide are not altogether destitute of merit, but the advantages their possess are considerably abated by their being more or less considered by different sects. This destroys their universality.

KINGS' BIRTH-DAYS are too local: one is not

obliged to rejoice on the birth-day of any king, excepting the king of one's own country. The joyous influence of the twelfth of August* is necessarily confined to England and its immediate dependencies; but there is no law to compel a Dutchman to cut capers and be lively on that day, to keep British subjects in countenance. The birth-day of Louis XVIII. is a day of jubilee throughout all France, and the English residents there emulate the natives of the country in their manifestations of happiness on the occasion: but in London an Englishman may rejoice or not, just as he pleases; and it is even probable that a Frenchman, living under the protection of a foreign government, might, on the seventeenth of November, exhibit a long face with impunity. Kings' birth-days are, decidedly, too local; but in all other respects they are so admirably fitted for holidays, that it is much to be lamented that all the crowned heads in Christendom were not ushered into the world on the same day of the year.

ONE'S OWN BIRTH-DAY! It is an excellent holiday for one's own self, but infinitely too limited in its joyous influence for general use. And, alas! how many poor souls are there to whom the anniversary of their birth brings nought but bitter recollections: to whom it is a day of sorrow rather than of joy: who look back with repentance or regret

* The birth-day of George the Fourth, of whose reign one of the remarkable events was the first appearance of this paper.

[illegible] which have passed; and heavily step [illegible] the year that is to come, without a [illegible] except that it may be their last!

[illegible] MAYOR'S DAY would be scarcely worth a [illegible], but that many persons of sense and [illegible] have considered it a fitting opportunity [illegible] holiday-making. The main objection against it is that it is even more limited in its influence than [illegible]'s birth-day. It is purely a London holiday, [illegible] holiday, in which the population west of [illegible] but takes as little concern as it does in the [illegible] of the virtues of Lady Godiva at Coventry. For my own part, I never could look upon it [illegible] holiday, or a day of rejoicing, even in the city. There is, to be sure, the ringing of bells, and the [illegible] of the River Fencibles; and there are processions and feastings: but these are all expedients [illegible] with a view to conceal the real sadness and melancholy inherent in the occasion—an intention [illegible] after all, is but very imperfectly executed. Take what is commonly considered as the gayest [illegible] most important point of the ceremonies of the day, the dinner:—(I address myself to those who are capable of digesting not merely turtle, but ideas)—[illegible] are few things intrinsically so afflicting. Rejoicing presupposes gladness; and little gladness [illegible] there be at a feast at which many an aching heart is seated—where we can even number the bosoms in which they throb. One of the most pro-

minent ornaments of the table, the late Lord Mayor, or, as he is vulgarly termed, the *old* Lord Mayor—as one would speak of a cast-aside, a worn-out utensil—is a discontented, a repining, an unhappy man. Human nature forbids it to be otherwise. And what must be the feelings of the guests when they ruminate on his! There he sits, a living sermon on the vanity, the frailty, and the brevity of terrestrial grandeur; a bitter, yet salutary sermon preached distinctly *at* and *to* the new Lord Mayor. But *he* heeds it not; he is too full of his infant honours. See! he rises—he gazes at his predecessor—there is condescension, pity, nay, somewhat of protection in his aspect—he pledges him—the *old one* accepts the cup—there is gall and wormwood in it—he casts a mournful glance at the glittering insignia which but yesterday were his—he smiles, but his heart is sinking within him!* "But yesterday," he thinks, "was I the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor! What am I now? neither one thing nor

* A certain worthy *new* Lord Mayor seems to have entertained the same ideas on the subject as the author. At the Guildhall dinner he rose to propose the health of his predecessor. This was his speech:—"My worthy *ancestor*, I rise to drink your health; and may you enjoy on the occasion of your *extinguishment* out of the dignity which I am elevated up into—" Here, perceiving that the gloom deepened on the countenance of his *worthy ancestor*, he added, in a tone of extreme kindness, "Come, come, d—n it, never mind; it aint my fault, you know; gulp down your wine, old boy, and don't think about it."

[illegible] what shall I be to-morrow? Mistress, plain Mister." Then; the numerous dependants and sub-officers who surround him, and who lose their dignities at the moment he is shorn of his! Ah, most pitiable of all, the *old* Lady Mayoress, "stirring to squench her tears," as a certain Deputy's Lady, celebrated rather for the force than the elegance of her phrases, once expressed it. But to contemplate the last expiring gasp of the civic dignity of a Lady Mayoress is too painful an effort—the heart bleeds at it. Can gaiety and gladness exist where we find in such abundance the elements of suffering and of woe? Spite of the human vessels into whose capacious recesses Guildhall discharges the savoury burthens of her tables—spite of their *bellies* which *think* the ninth of November a day of rejoicing, and would gainsay me, Lord Mayor's Day can never become a holiday.

No; the first day of the new year is decidedly the day of all others; and it is much to be lamented that in England it is so little distinguished. In London, indeed, the Bank is closed, and the quays are deserted; but the shops are open, people walk about in their every-day clothes, and the day *looks* like any other; and, except a dinner of ceremony or of good fellowship, nothing is done to mark it, and confer on it the pre-eminence it merits. We drink the Old Year out (a melancholy, funereal ceremony—the interring of one who has been our

companion through storm and sunshine for a whole twelvemonth), and we drink the New Year in: but this short welcome over, we inhospitably leave the stranger to make its way as it can.

But New Year's Day in Paris! *Le Jour de l'An*, as the French emphatically call it—*the day of the year*—the day of all others—is a holiday indeed. The Parisians pay no honours to the old year; it has performed its office, resigned its place; it is past, gone, dead, defunct; all the harm or the good it could do is done, and there is an end of it. But what a merry welcome is given to its successor! Perhaps this is somewhat owing to national character: the French soon forget an old acquaintance, and speedily become familar with a new one. In Paris the very appearance of New Year's Day is sufficient to distinguish it; and any one acquainted with Parisian manners, who should drop from the clouds down upon the Boulevards, would at once exclaim, "Parbleu! c'est le Jour de l'An!"

It is unlike the *Carnival*, which is distinguished by its maskings and its buffooneries. At every turn you meet a tall lanky punch, or an unwieldy harlequin, with his hands in his breeches-pockets; and coach-loads of grotesque disguises rattle through the streets.

It is unlike the *Saint Louis*, which is the holiday of the rabble; when all the scum of Paris is in motion; when bread, and sausages, and wine, are distributed

all the theatres are thrown open at noon-

the *Fête Dieu*, which is the holiday of the religious, or the pretenders to religion; when solemn processions move along the streets, and the air is perfumed with incense and sweet herbs.

Unlike *Longchamps*, the period devoted to the worship of Fashion, the goddess who exercises unbounded sway over all ranks and classes in Paris. It is then she issues her mandates, and dictates the mode in which it is her will to be worshipped for the season to come. It is the holiday of the fop and the *petites maitresses*: it is the harvest of the tailor and the *marchande des modes*: from the prince to the porter, from the duchess down to the *poissarde*, every one who has a reputation to maintain in the *fashionable world*—and who has not?—must sport something new on the occasion: a carriage, a pelisse, a set of harness, liveries, a gown, a hat, a ribband, each according to their station. It is the period of universal pretension. Not a little daughter of a little *bourgeois*, whose severe economies throughout the preceding winter have enabled her to procure a coloured muslin gown for *Longchamps*, but fancies, as she strolls along from the *Fauxbourg St. Martin* to the *Champs Elysées*, that she is the paramount object of admiration. "Dieu! comme ma robe a fait de l'effet à Longchamps!" The Countess thinks the same of her new liveries; the dandy of his cabriolet; the

opera girl of her carriage, just presented to her by some booby *milord*, who is duped, jilted, laughed at, ridiculed, and caricatured, for his misplaced liberality.

My landlord had bought a new umbrella. One day I begged him to lend it to me. It was impossible; for he had not bought it to have it rained upon—at least until after he had shown it at *Longchamps*.

And then the jealousies, the quarrels, the heart-burnings, this important season excites! Previously to the last *Longchamps*, Madame St. Leon, in pure openness of heart, showed the bonnet she intended to wear to her intimate friend Madame Desrosiers. Will it be credited! Madame Desrosiers went immediately to the *marchande des modes* who made it, and ordered one precisely similar, in which she appeared at *Longchamps* an hour earlier than her friend. Madame St. Leon justly stigmatized this conduct as a piece of unheard of treachery—*une trahison inouïe!*

But what follows is scarcely in human nature—it is so improbable, yet so true, that it might form the subject of a melodrama. Madame La Jeune and Madame St. Victor were bound together by the strongest bonds of friendship and affection—they were sisters rather than friends—their hopes, their fears, their wishes, their sorrows, their pleasures were in common—their confidence was mutual:—

they [illegible] swore that they had *no* secrets from each other, and, in fact, this was *almost* true. As might be expected, at the approach of *Longchamps*, they consulted together about the dresses they should wear, and, as might be expected, it was settled that, as on former occasions, their dresses should be exactly alike. The chief point agreed upon was, that their gowns should be made with four *ruches*, or flounces. My pen almost rejects its office. Madame St. Victor appeared in a gown with six *ruches!* Every one admitted that Madame St. Victor's conduct was *de la dernière infamie*. The infamy of Madame St. Victor's conduct is, perhaps, somewhat redeemed by the circumstance of her dear friend having secretly ordered *five ruches* to her gown, of which fact Madame St. Victor was fortunately informed in time to advance upon the encroaches of her treacherous *amie*.

In former times, Queens did not disdain to mingle in this combat of vanity and display. The unfortunate Marie-Antoinette once ordered a mistress of the Comte d'Artois (afterwards Charles X.) to be turned out of the *Champs Elysées*, for presuming to appear in an equipage which eclipsed the splendour of her own: or rather (for such was in reality the pretence of the offence) on account of the profusion of rare and expensive flowers with which, at that season, the horses were decorated.* *Now*, the

* The person who gave so great offence to Royalty was Mdlle. Du

struggle is abandoned to opera-girls, fourth-rate actresses, kept mistresses, and the *petite bourgeoisie*. The real Fashion either goes on foot to behold the scene, or in a carriage *sans pretension*.

But the *Jour de l'An* is everybody's holiday; the holiday of all ages, ranks, and conditions. Relations, friends, acquaintance, visit each other, kiss, and

Thé, as it is correctly stated by a writer in *Blackwood* for March, 1844. He is not quite correct, however, in classing her with the first-rate dancers of her time, since she never advanced beyond the rank of a *coryphée*. Mademoiselle Du Thé, whose real name was Gérard, was of respectable parentage, her father having been an officer of some distinction in the artillery. She was as much distinguished for her amiability and goodness of heart as for her great beauty. Early in life she came to England, where, after a residence of some years, and even when her beauty had been considerably impaired by an attack of smallpox of the most virulent kind, she received an offer of marriage from a gentleman of large fortune, and of great distinction, in the county of Bedford. The offer she declined; but, though unmarried, so exemplary was her conduct in all other respects, that she was privately visited by more than one of the leading ladies of that county, in which, for a portion of every year during her long continuance in England, she resided. Some time after the peace of 1815, she returned to Paris, where she died not very long ago, having nearly attained her eightieth year. She was tall and finely formed; and, to the last, erect, and of deportment at once dignified and graceful. She possessed an income which enabled her to enjoy all the comforts and many of the elegances of life, and to indulge in a liberal hospitality. She was unostentatiously charitable; and many a fair member of that profession to which in early life she herself had belonged—of some of whom the names have since become celebrated—did her bounty assist in the outset of their career. She was beloved and respected by all who knew her. And thus ends the well-merited eulogy of a *danseuse* of the olden time.

sugar-plums. For weeks previous to it, all the sellers and venders of fancy articles, from diamond necklaces and tiaras, down to sweetmeat boxes, are busily employed in the preparation of elegant New Year's presents. But the staple commodity of French commerce, at this period, is sugar-plums. At all times of the year are the shops of the *marchands de bon-bons*, in this modern Athens (as the Parisians call Paris), amply stocked, and constant is the demand for their luscious contents: but now the superb *magazins* in the Rue Vivienne, the splendid *boutiques* on the Boulevards, the magnificent *dépôts* in the Palais Royal, are rich in sweets beyond even that sugary conception, a child's paradise; and they are literally crowded from morning till night by persons of all ages, men, women, and children. Vast and various is the invention of the *fabricants* of this important necessary of life; and sugar is formed into tasteful imitations of carrots, turnips, ends of candle, roses, sausages, soap, bead-necklaces—all that is nice or nasty in nature and art. Ounce weights are thrown aside, and nothing under dozens of pounds is to be seen on the groaning counters: the wearied venders forget to number by units, and fly to scores, hundreds, and thousands. But brilliant as are the exhibitions of sugar-work in this gay quarter of the town, they must yield for quantity to the astounding masses of the *Rue des Lombards*. That is the place resorted to by great

purchasers, by such as require, not pounds, but hundredweights, for distribution. There reside all the mighty compounders, the venders at first hand; and sugar-plum makers are as numerous in the Parisian Lombard Street, as are the traffickers in *douceurs* of a more substantial character in its namesake in London.

The day has scarcely dawned, and all is life, bustle, and movement. The visiting lists are prepared, the presents arranged, the cards are placed in due order of delivery. Vehicles of all descriptions are already crossing and jostling in every quarter of the city. Fortunate are they who, unblest with a *calèche* or a *cabriolet* of their own, have succeeded in engaging one for the day at six times its ordinary cost. Happy is he whose eloquence has prevailed with the driver of a *fiacre* or a cabriolet, to engage *by the hour* for three or four times the usual fare, or his purse would become lighter by thirty sous at each visit he made, though but the width of a street interposed between them. These servants of the public, the hackney-coachmen, are rather a more decent set of people than the same class in London, and the cabriolet drivers are again superior to *them*. The superiority of the latter may in some measure be accounted for from their constant opportunities of conversation with their *fares*; while the coachmen, like ours, are either left by themselves on their seats, or to associate one with

the other, which alternative leaving them in tolerably [illegible]. Abandoning this important point to the consideration of any young aspirant in moral philosophy who may be in want of a thesis, I shall simply suggest, as a probable reason why both are so civil and well-conducted as such gentry can be, that a very benevolent institution, called the Police, watches over them with the most constant and affectionate solicitude.

"Coachman," said I to a London jarvey, "why, really, you are a decent sort of man!"

"Vy, master, I'm about as good as the rest on us; but, on the 'ole, us 'ackney-coachmen should be the greatest scamps in all Lunnun, if them 'ere watchmen didn't 'inder us."

"And how do they so?"

"Vy, because they somehow contrive to be even greater scamps than us."

On New Year's Day the Paris fraternity are denied the enjoyment of what seems to be their birthright—rudeness and extortion; or, rather, their exercise of it is tolerated. There, on yonder desolate stand, are collected eighteen or twenty people who have been waiting, the greater part of the morning, the *possibility* of the arrival of an unhired vehicle. At length—for wonders never cease—a cabriolet approaches. It is surrounded, besieged, assaulted, stormed. It is literally put up to auction to be let to the highest bidder. That poor servant

of the public, its driver, now finds that the public is his, and his very humble and beseeching servant too. "Eh, bien, voyons, combien me donnerez vous?" "I'll give you—" says one, taking out his watch. "Au diable, l'imbecile! he wants a cabriolet *à l'heure* on New Year's Day—to drive him to Pontoise perhaps." (A place celebrated for its calves.) "And you there, *grand nigaud*, with your watch in your hand! *A bas les montres*, or I'll listen to none of you. *A la course, à la course!* And you, *ma petite demoiselle*, what is it you offer? How! three francs! *Elle est gentille, la petite, avec ses trois francs! Allons! tout ça m'ennuie.* I'll go take a drive in the Bois de Boulogne for my own pleasure." At length he consents to take a little squat *négociant* at five times the usual fare, exclaiming, as he drives off, "Ma foi, j'ai trop bon cœur—je me laisse attendrir."

But all this time I have my own pockets full of sugar-plums, a cumbrous load! There—I have got through *my* few visits, and now—But hold, I must not forget Monsieur Valeour. I believe we do not like each other, but I find his *soirées* very agreeable; he has sometimes need of my counsels in the management of his horses and dogs; and, this being sufficient for the establishment of a very decent friendship, we cordially embrace and exchange sugar-plums every New Year's Day. The family is assembled in Madame's bed-chamber. They surround a large marble table which is

[illegible], with baskets, silken-bags, paper vases, pasteboard cornucopias, and other vessels of a similar description, all full of bon-bons, dragées, sugar-candy, sugar-almonds, sugar-plums—sugar in all forms, and of all colours. They are in ecstasies at some sugar ends of candle, with chocolate wicks, just presented by a visitor, and agree that not only they are delicious, but made *à ravir!—divinement!* M. Valcour, who expects a seat in the next Chamber of Deputies, and is now engaged in the composition of a work on political economy, takes me aside, and, with a very profound contraction of the brow, says, "Setting aside all national prejudices, you cannot but acknowledge that we have *perfectioned* these things in France." I approach Madame, kiss each of her cheeks, and add my mite to the mountain of sweets. Madame's mother is present,—a good snuff-taking lady of sixty-seven—but the ceremony is *de rigueur*, and must be performed. In this world there is a pretty equal balance of good and ill; and in my own case, but half an hour before, I made my New Year's visit to a sprightly little grandmother just turned of four-and-thirty, who, on my entrance, was singing a waltz aloud, and dancing round a chair. Young grandmothers are not uncommon in France; and a man of certain age might even marry a great grandmother without incurring the ridicule which such a step would draw down upon him in England.

But to return to M. Valcour. Having paid the usual respects to the mamma and the grandmamma, I present a small packet of peppermint drops to papa—I might kiss him too—who instantly swallows a handful, and praises them in terms of exaggeration suitable to the occasion. Then come masters Alexis, Achille, Hector, and Télémaque, and the daughters Cléopatre, Euphrosyne, and Terpsichore, —names very common in French families—and these relieve me of the remainder of my burthen. I withdraw; but not till Madame has shown me an instance of *Monsieur's aimabilité*. He had that morning presented her with a *corbeille* (an ornamented satin box), which, in the simplicity of her heart, she imagined contained nothing but sugar-plums; but what was her astonishment when, on removing them, she discovered a *Cachemire magnifique!* Her astonishment, however, seemed rather affected; for had M. Valcour presented her with a set of diamonds, he must, in honour of the day, have smothered them in *bon-bons*.

And now, being at leisure, this corner window at Tortoni's is a convenient spot for observing a variety of passers. There is, however, a little accident which is rather unfavourable to observation, It is a thick, dense, heavy, dirty-brown, ill-flavoured vapour, which prevents one's seeing distinctly twenty yards before one: a phenomenon such as in London we term a *fog*, but which I am positively assured by a

[illegible] it may ride is not a fog, but merely a [illegible] exhalation; fogs being peculiar to England, and entirely unknown in this *beau climât*—"*d'ailleurs* [illegible] *de toute le monde, ça.*" As this is known [illegible] the world, at least to all Paris, which, according to French notions, means precisely the same thing; and fogs moreover being the curse of England, prevailing alike in July and November, obscuring the sun, and intercepting his power of ripening even an apple—very current opinions all over the said world—it is useless to dispute the point.

In yonder carriage is the Minister for the —— Department. He is going to the Palace to pay to his august inhabitant his annual tribute of homage; or, to express it more accurately (since ministries *et cetera* are liable to change), to render the tribute of homage due from the —— Department to the Palace. There will he see assembled all his honourable colleagues, together with the *corps diplomatique*, a crowd of civil dignitaries, Marshals, Generals, Presidents, Bishops, Abbés, Professors, Academicians, Governors of Public Institutions, Deputations from Chief Towns, and Representatives of a variety of great Cities, all performing the same ceremony. We cannot but approve of this custom—it forms a bond of attachment between the people and their governor—*it has been faithfully observed for the last thirty years.**

Not the least curious among the different groups is

* This paper was written in 1823. We may, now, therefore, (and with equal propriety), for *thirty years* read *fifty*.

the deputation from the *Dames de la Halle*—*Anglicè*, fish-fags. The visit of these *Ladies*—the French are certainly the politest people in the world—will be formally noticed in to-morrow's *Moniteur*. These gentle creatures have sometimes rendered their *calls* at the Royal Palaces more extensively notorious. One cannot but think that French politeness is running to waste when we see it so indiscriminately lavished. In this instance, perhaps, profusion is prudent. *Mesdames les poissardes*, who are themselves not remarkable for a delicate choice of language, are exceedingly fastidious about the forms of address used towards them; and they are mistresses of a mode of teaching people to keep civil tongues in their heads, which has the great merit of being adapted to the meanest capacities.

There goes Monsieur le Chevalier de ——. His visit is to a certain man in power with whom he is but slightly acquainted—it is his first—*n'importe*—on the *Jour de l'An*, a visit is always *aimable*. The man in power can recommend to a vacant *Préfecture*, which the Chevalier is anxious to obtain. The patron is just gone out. *Tant mieux*. But Madame is visible. *Tant mieux encore*. He presents a little box of *bon-bons*. Madame laughingly remarks that the box is *heavy* for its *size*. Monsieur le Chevalier is already destined to fill the vacant *Préfecture*.

But the man in power—where is he all this time? He wants an important place for his son, and is gone to slide a box of *bon-bons* into the hand of a

[illegible] wants [illegible] himself. In France, as in most other countries, the art of adroitly administering compliments, and the art of obtaining places, are synonymous phrases.

That is Mademoiselle —— of the Théâtre Français. Her first visit is to Monsieur ——, editor of the —— journal. Three days ago she received a hint that he had prepared a thundering article against her intended performance of *Célimine*, which chances to act for the first time on Monday next. The chased silver-gilt *soupière* at her side is a new-year's present for *Monsieur le Redacteur*. The article will not appear. Her performance will be cited as a model *de grace, d'intelligence, et d'esprit*.

That?—Hush! turn away, or he will call us out for merely looking at him. 'Tis Z——, the celebrated duellist. Yesterday he wounded General de [illegible]; the day before he killed M. de C——; and he has an affair on hand for to-morrow. To-day he goes about distributing sugar-plums, as in duty bound, for *c'est un homme très aimable*.

I don't know either of the two gentlemen who are kissing both sides of each other's faces, bowing, and exchanging little paper packets. The very old man passing close to them, in a single-breasted faded silk coat, the colour of which once was apple-blossom, is the younger brother of the Comte de ——. He is on his way to pay his annual visit to Mademoiselle ——, who was his mistress some years before the

breaking out of the Revolution. He stops to purchase a *bouquet* composed of violets and roses—violets and roses on New Year's Day!—his accustomed present. His visit is not one of affection—scarcely of friendship—*c'est une affaire d'habitude.*

I am of your opinion, that Mademoiselle Entrechat, the opera-dancer, is extraordinarily ugly, and of opinion with every one else that she is a fool. She is handsome enough, however, in the estimation of our countryman, Sir X—— Y—— (who is *economizing* in Paris), because she dances, and has just sense enough to dupe him—very little is sufficient, Heaven knows! He is now on his way to her with a splendid *cachemire* and a few *rouleaus*. "*Vraiment, les Anglais sont charmants.*" The poor simpleton believes she means it, and sputters something in unintelligible French in reply; at which Mademoiselle's *brother* swears a big oath, that *Monsieur l'Anglais a de l'esprit comme quatre.* Sir X—— Y—— invites him to dinner; but the Captain *makes it a rule to dine with his sister on New Year's Day.* O! if some of our poor simple countrymen could but see behind the curtain——! But 'tis their affair, not mine.

In that cabriolet is an actress who wants to come out at the Comic Opera. What could have put it into her head that Monsieur L——, who has a voice potential in the Theatrical Senate, has just occasion for a breakfast-service in Sevres porcelaine!

Behind is a hackney-coachful of little *figurantes*,

together for the expense of it. *étrenner* the ballet-master. *One* to dance in the rear where nobody can another is anxious to dance *seule;* a third daughter of my washerwoman) is sure she could if they would but let her try; a fourth wants *de loges* for her *maman* who sells chestnuts at yonder corner. They offer their plums; but, alas! they lack the gilding. Never young ladies. Emigration is not yet at an economy is the order of the day, in England, Paris is the place for economising in. Next perhaps, you too may be provided with elo- to soften the hearts of the rulers of destinies.

Wherefore, it may be asked, is all this visiting, and and present-making, and sugar-plumizing, down either to the account of sheer interest, that of heartless form? Partly to the one, partly to the other, and some part of it to principle than either. But, be it as it may, of interest receive a decent covering from occasion: these heartless forms serve to keep together; and, without philosophizing upon matter, let it be set down that, of all the days the year, none is so perfect a holiday as NEW YEAR'S DAY IN PARIS.

A LOVE-CONFIDENCE.

A FACT.

Some years ago, at one of Dr. Y——'s *soirées*, at Paris, I met an Irish gentleman whose name was *not* O'Sullivan, but whom, for the sake of concealment, I shall so designate. I had never seen him before, nor were we upon that occasion introduced to each other; but this ceremony he soon rendered needless by introducing himself. With a smile peculiarly Irish and modest, and with a tinge of the brogue just sufficient to "give the world assurance of a" Pat, he thus addressed me:—

"I beg ten thousand pardons, sir: if I am not greatly mistaken, your name is Fidkins." (I take the same privilege of concealment, under an assumed name, as I have allowed to my new friend.)

"Fidkins *is* my name."

"I beg ten thousand pardons again, sir: but if I am not greatly mistaken, you have lately written

[illegible] 'The Reluctant Lover.'" (My play, [illegible] myself, travels *incog.*)

"[illegible], sir."

"[illegible] them, sir, upon my honour and conscience, that is a mighty pretty thing to be able to say."

He smiled, bowed and withdrew; and I, as in duty bound, was much amused at the oddity of the proceeding. Later in the evening, Dr. Y——, at Mr. O'Sullivan's especial request, "favoured" him with a formal introduction to me.

On the following morning, at an hour much earlier than is usual for paying visits of ceremony, my servant brought in Mr. O'Sullivan's card, with Mr. O'Sullivan's most earnest request that I would grant him a quarter of an hour's interview. The rule being granted, as a lawyer would say, the gentleman entered, and after exhausting no inconsiderable portion of the time stipulated for in preparatory 'hems' and 'haha,' he thus began:—

"I beg ten thousand pardons, sir;—sir, I am the most unfortunate of existing creatures, and I come to beg your kind assistance. I have the misfortune, sir, to be most miserably in ——"

"Debt," I expected he would have added, and accordingly made the usual amiable preparations for expressing "my regret at my utter inability," &c. &c., but he continued,—

"Love!"

It is astonishing with what celerity the sluices of

our sympathy are opened, and how copious is the stream, when it is not required to flow *Bank*-ward. "Sir," said I, "I should be happy to be serviceable to you in any manner in the world; but, really, it seems to me that in a case of this nature—"

"Pardon me, sir, but that is the very thing: you are the person of all others best qualified to assist me. As I said, sir, I am most awfully in love, but unluckily, sir, I—I am bashful."

"And so, sir, you come to borrow a little of my superfluous impudence? I am flattered by the compliment."

"Don't misunderstand me, sir; pray don't. No, sir; the case is this: your play is full of love-schemes (and, upon my honour and conscience, very clever they are!), but it so happens that there is not one among them which suits my particular case."

As I consider a *character* always worth humouring, I resolved to humour this.

"Well, Mr. O'Sullivan, have the kindness to *state* your case, and if I can serve you I will."

"Why, then, sir, in the first place, the lady is a widow—she's thirty-five, or thereabouts: no great disparity between us, as I am thirty-two."

"Is the lady handsome?"

"Why, that's a mere matter of taste, but—why, yes, in my eyes, she—I think, she *is* handsome. But now for the difficulty: she has eight hundred a year of her own."

[illegible] perhaps; but, surely, not an objec-[illegible]?"

[illegible], yes, and it is. If I propose to her, won't people say it is for the sake of the dirty lucre, when, if you could read my heart, Mr. Fidkins, you'd see [illegible]. Besides, have not I exactly eight hundred a year of my own—in Ireland?—only barring that for the last three years the rents won't come in—so as for her money, you see——! But to make an end, sir, I'm cruelly in love with her, and if she won't marry me, I'll die."

"But it seems that you have not yet proposed to the lady. Now it strikes me that, as a preliminary step, you should do so: at least you should sound her affections; for should they be engaged in another quarter,—"

"Don't talk of that, sir; the very thought of that drives me mad. But I'll follow your advice: I'll see her to-day, and should she refuse me, let nobody think I'll be found alive to-morrow."

On the day following he came to me again: the upshot of his interview with the lady had been a flat rejection. Upon many subsequent occasions he repeated his addresses, invariably with a similar result; and, upon each occasion, I received the honour of his confidence, together with the alarming assurance that *at length* his heart was broken, and that, for him, the sun had risen for the last time.

It was in vain that I remonstrated with him on

the folly of indulging a hopeless passion, or that I endeavoured to persuade him to try, by a change of scene, to forget the cruel fair one; to quit Paris and go to Rome, or Nova Scotia; or to carry out a stock of pigs, paupers, and poultry, and colonize some newly-discovered land. His parting phrase still was, "'Tis all of no use; she won't marry me; I'm the most miserable of Earth's creatures, and *now* I'll *die*."

Business suddenly calling me to England, I neither saw nor heard of, and had almost forgotten, "the most miserable of Earth's creatures;" till, one day, about two years and a half afterwards, as I was walking along Pall Mall, I met him. He came up to me, and shaking me violently by both hands, exclaimed,—"My dear Sir—my dear friend—at last I see you again! This is the happiest moment I have enjoyed for many a day! You remember that unhappy attachment of mine? I was the most miserable man alive *then;* I'm millions of times more miserable *now!*"

"For shame, Mr. O'Sullivan," said I; "be a man and forget her."

"Is it forget her, you say! And how the divil will I forget her when we've been married these two years? and, what's worse, div'l a rap had she ever got any more than myself!"

DELICATE ATTENTIONS.

Gingerly!" exclaimed Tom Damper, as he [illegible] the public drawing-room at Mrs Bustle's [illegible] house at Brighton;—"Why, Gingerly! [illegible] of the finest days of the season; all the [illegible] out enjoying it; yet here are you, at three [illegible] sitting alone, in the self-same chair, in the [illegible] attitude, and looking through the self-[illegible] of glass, as at eleven this morning when [illegible] you. What ails you?"

Gingerly made no reply; but breathed on one of [illegible] of glass, drew the letter B on it with his [illegible] finger, and heaved a sigh.

"You are the oddest fellow in the universe," [illegible] Damper. "We have been here nearly a [illegible], yet, since about the third day after our [illegible] you have hardly stirred out of the house."

"It's a very nice house," said Gingerly; and he [illegible] a heavier sigh than before.

"It was at my recommendation you came to it," [illegible] Damper; "but, though I am not insensible to

the merits of the inside of it, its outside also has many charms for me. Again I ask, what ails you?"

"Damper!" said Gingerly.

"Well."

"Damper!" repeated Gingerly, with a sigh.

"You said that before."

"Damper—were you ever in love?"

"I was never out of it till I had turned five-and-forty; but being, at this present talking, within two months of fifty, and a bachelor moreover, I should think myself a fool were I in such a scrape now. You, who are by five years my senior, of course are not."

Gingerly made no reply; but, sighing profoundly, took his handkerchief from his pocket and smeared out the large, flourishing B which he had just before drawn. There was a pause of a minute.

"Damper—may I trust you with a secret?"

"Yes,—so it be not a love-confidence."

"In that case, my dear friend, I shall have nothing to thank you for."

"Seriously now, my dear Gingerly, do you mean to say you are in love?"

Gingerly expended another sigh, again turned towards his favourite pane, and reinstated his big, bouncing B.

"Oh, Damper!" at length he exclaimed, "if you had a heart you would feel for me."

"I should like to see you hanging, or drowning, or suffering under any reasonable trouble; but to feel for an old bachelor of fifty-five in love, and for the first time in his life, too: ridiculous! But, come; I suppose I must listen to you, so tell me all about it."

"And who so proper as you for the confidence, when you are to blame for the accident?"

"I!" exclaimed Damper, with unfeigned surprise.

"Yes, you," answered Gingerly; "because, but for your recommendation, I never should have set foot in Mrs. Bustle's boarding-house."

"So, then, it is some one in this house who has smitten your susceptible old heart?" said Damper, with a laugh. And he continued: "I think I can name the tender fair one?"

"To be sure you can," replied Gingerly.

"It is old Widow Swillswallow, who eats and drinks from morning till night, and is heard by all in the house snoring from night till morning."

"Faugh!" exclaimed Gingerly, with a shudder of disgust.

"Or old Miss Fubsworth, who was born on the day of the coronation of George the Third?"

"Absurd!" exclaimed Gingerly.

"Then it must be old Widow Waddilove; for she is the only other lady-lodger here."

"Preposterous!" cried Gingerly, somewhat an-

grily. "Old *this*, and old *that*! Is there nobody else you can think of?"

"There is but one other," replied Damper; "in which case I am sorry for you. You have not the slightest chance in that quarter; for Mrs. Bustle is engaged to be married to Captain O'Popper."

"*Mistress* Bustle! Pooh! Can't you think of *one* more."

"There is not one more, except, indeed, her daughter, Betsy."

"Well?" said Gingerly.

"Well?" echoed Damper. "You can't be thinking of her."

"And why not? She is very pretty."

"True," replied Damper; "but you forget that she is also very young."

"No," said Gingerly; "that's the very thing I am thinking about. She is eighteen: a delicious age! Surely, now, you don't pretend that a girl of eighteen is too young for me?"

"Not a day," replied Damper, somewhat drily; "but I, who am your junior, should think myself too old for a girl of eighteen."

"I don't care for that, my good friend. I am my own master; have an unencumbered nine hundred a year; am not troubled with a relation in the world—and—and—in short, I'm resolved to marry Betsy Bustle." Saying which he flourished half-

[illegible] suit of unconquerable determination.

Dapper gave him a twirl round and stared him [illegible]

"Gingerly," said he; "if your head were not as [illegible] hair as an apple, I should advise you to go this moment and get it shaved, for you are mad—[illegible] raving mad. Fifty-five and eighteen! If you do marry Miss Bustle, my fine fellow, look out for squalls."

"Of course," replied Gingerly, with a look of [illegible] simplicity; "I must expect that our children will squall just the same as other people's."

"You misunderstand me; I say, if you do marry Miss Bustle, remember that there is already a lover in the case."

"Dapper—don't say so," cried Gingerly.

"There is," continued the consoling friend; "there is, or I am much mistaken. A favoured lover, too: favoured by the daughter, by the mother, and, which is of no little importance, by Captain Popper also—the Captain, as you know, being as much master here as if he and Mrs. Bustle were already united."

Gingerly turned pale, and big drops rolled from [illegible] brow. For some time he was unable to speak. At length, with faltering voice, he inquired of Dapper what grounds he had for his belief.

"Chiefly this," replied the latter: "I have fre-

quently heard her speak to her mother about a certain George; and from the tone in which she always utters the name ———"

"Then I am the happiest man alive!" joyfully exclaimed Gingerly. "My name is George."

"But," said the imperturbable friend, "she sometimes speaks of him as '*young* George.'"

"And what then? I never told her my age; and she is not obliged to know that I am fifty—or so. I tell you what, Damper: that I am the object of her tender thoughts I am, at length, certain—that is to say, *almost* certain. Now, I would have proof of it, and *that* you must obtain for me."

"I have already told you I will have nothing to do with a love confidence," coolly replied Damper.

"But you must, my dear Damper; for this once you must—unless you wish to see your poor friend throw himself from the head of the chain-pier souse into the sea."

As Gingerly uttered these words with something like earnestness, his friend, unwilling to be accessory to such a catastrophe, consented, after some further entreaty, to undertake the task:—not without thinking to himself that should Gingerly actually marry the girl, he would be the greatest fool in the universe—excepting only the girl herself for marrying him.

"Now," said Gingerly, "I must first of all confess to you that I am the most timid man alive;

—and that is why I have never to mortal woman. Indeed, as the question at all, it is a thing I could to live a thousand years. Pop! To a man the very word itself is a horrid I could as soon pop a pistol at a woman's the question at her heart. No: if I succeed, I shall, in ensnaring the heart of my Betsy, it will be, not by any daring but by sly approaches, by little gallan- by delicate attentions, such as the female heart can appreciate, such as no female heart can ."

"And when do you mean to begin?" inquired Dumpet.

"I shall astonish you, my dear fellow, I know I I *have* begun. I have already made one step advance, and I flatter myself you will give me credit for the ingenuity of it. You know the novel that everybody is talking about—'The Lover.' Well; the hero, Mortimer St. Julian Mowbray Fitz-Eustaceville, is a character exactly resembling me—timid as I am—something younger, handsomer; but that does not signify—and the heroine is very much like Miss Bustle. Yesterday, I bought the book—paid a guinea and a half for it, as I hoped to be saved; and sent it anonymously to Betsy—anonymously. Do you mark the delicate attention?"

"I do," replied Damper; "but, for the life of me, I can't discover the ingenuity of the proceeding."

"It consists in this—and that is the point you must assist me in. Nearly at the end of the first volume there is a situation of great interest, where the timid lover first hints at his passion for the heroine. I put a piece of paper into the book to mark the place, and Miss Bustle *must* have noticed it. Now, I want you to draw from her whether, in reading that passage—for I saw her reading it last night—she thought of me. If she did she is mine. That I call both delicate and ingenious."

At this moment Miss Betsy entered the room, and, greatly to the satisfaction of Gingerly, with a volume of the "Timid Lover" in her hand. Gingerly having whispered to his friend that now was the time for the experiment, he cast a look of ludicrous tenderness at the young lady, stammered a few words which were utterly unintelligible, and went out for a walk; but with the intention of soon returning to learn the result of Damper's inquiries.

"What a funny gentleman!" exclaimed Miss Bustle, as Gingerly made his retiring bow.

"Funny!" thought Damper; "that is not a very promising epithet for the timid lover."

"His manners are very much altered since he first came here," continued Miss Bustle. "*Then* he was very talkative; *now* he scarcely ever utters a word

[redacted] such comical looks, too! Captain [redacted] yesterday that one would think he is [redacted] eyes at somebody or other—though [redacted] what that means. But he is a nice [redacted] after all. I wonder, though, he does not [redacted] wig; his old bald head shines so one can almost see one's face in it. I don't think such a [redacted] head is pretty.

It will not be expected that Damper was much encouraged by these observations to proceed on his friend's behalf; but, having undertaken his cause, he resolved against abandoning it.

"Miss Bustle," said he, "upon one point you are mistaken concerning Mr. Gingerly: he is not old—not remarkably old."

"Poor me!" exclaimed Miss Bustle; "how one may be deceived by appearances! He looks a great deal older than my poor, dear, dead-and-gone grandpapa, who was sixty-three when he died."

"He is nothing like so old as that," said Damper; "and then, Miss Bustle—and then he is rich."

This last word did Damper emphasize in a way intended to produce an effect—and so it did.

"Rich!" responded Miss Bustle; "is he indeed? Lord! how I should like to have *him*—for a grandpapa. I daresay he is very kind to *his* grandchildren."

The learned advocate perceiving that he had taken

nothing by his motion, fell back upon the point on which he had been chiefly instructed; and merely explaining, by the way, that, as his friend was unmarried, it was impossible he should have children; and that, therefore, grandchildren were out of the question; he went at once to the subject of the book.

"Is that a new work you are reading, Miss Bustle?"

"Yes, Sir; it is the 'Timid Lover,' and is only just out."

"You are fortunate in getting it so early from a circulating library," observed Damper, pretending ignorance of the fact.

"Anxious as I was to read it, I might have waited six weeks for it had I depended on the library; and after all, perhaps, have been obliged (as one often is for the accommodation of other subscribers) to read the third volume first. No, Sir, it is a present; and although it came anonymously, I know very well who sent it. What delicate attention! Oh!" and here the young lady placed her hand upon her heart, and sighed.

"Bravo!" thought Damper; "this will do. And pray, Miss," said he, "is there not in it one situation of peculiar interest? I mean that where the timid lover first hints at his passion for the heroine."

"It is charming," replied Miss Betsy; "it absolutely drew tears from me!"

[illegible] no one—*no one*—whilst [illegible] it?" inquired Damper.

"[illegible] I did; and I'll tell you, in confidence, what I thought all the way through of Mr. Gingerly."

"Well," thought Damper; "there is no accounting for the freaks of the heart! And that my old friend should make a conquest of one of the prettiest girls in Brighton!"

"The two characters are so alike; except," continued Miss Bustle, "that Mr. Gingerly is *rather* the elder of the two."

"Yes, yes; I admit that my friend is a little older than the hero, Mortimer St. Julian de Mowbray Fitz-Eustaceville, is represented to be."

"What!" exclaimed Miss Betsy, bursting into an immoderate fit of laughter; "think of *him* as the hero, Fitz-Eustaceville! Shocking! No; what makes me think of him was the nasty old rival, Lord Grumblethorpe, who comes in at the critical moment and prevents the declaration of love. But Miss Eustaceville is so like a certain person!—But wasn't it a delicate attention, Mr. Damper, on the part of the *friend* who sent me the books? And, then, to put a slip of paper into that very place! Why it speaks volumes!"

At this moment Mr. Gingerly returned; and Miss Bustle being summoned by a servant to go to her mamma, Gingerly and Damper were left together.

"Well," eagerly cried the timid lover; "well, have you sounded her?"

"I have," was the reply.

"She has read the passage in question?"

"Every syllable of it."

"Did it produce any effect upon her?"

"Tremendous!"

"Did she cry? That 's the great point. Did she cry?"

"A bucketful!"

"You delight me, my dear Damper. Did she notice the bit of paper? Did she speak of me? Did she remark upon the delicate attention?"

"Yes, yes, yes, yes," impatiently replied Damper. "And, now, pray don't tease me any more about it."

"But, my dear, dear Damper, did she speak much about me? and what was it she said?"

"Why—not much; but what she did say was quite conclusive."

"I told you so: I knew that, by a little ingenious contrivance, by a few delicate attentions, I should make my way to her heart."

"Now, my good friend," said Damper, gravely, "prepare yourself for a ——"

Damper's speech, the tendency of which would doubtless have been to undeceive his self-deluded friend, was cut short by the dinner-bell; and they descended to the dining-room, Gingerly de-

spare neither pains nor ex-
(in his own delicate way) the affections
Damper sighed for the infa-
poor Gingerly, and resolved, in his own
from any aggravated disappoint-
by repeating to him, at the earliest opportu-
word for word, all that had passed in his
with the young lady.

the friends entered the dining-room they
places, all except two, occupied. These
the head of the table, at which was seated
Captain O'Popper did the honours
At his left was the lovely Betsy, and
was a young man of about three-and-
This gentleman wore a blue frock-coat of
a buff waistcoat, and a military stock.
looking; had a profusion of
huge whiskers, and mustachios of the
indeed, as might well have excited
of one of Napoleon's Old Guard. He
of cigar, and was—clerk to an attorney
This personage was no other than
George—Mr. George Hobnill.

cast a longing look towards the end of
where was seated his beloved, but there
a place vacant within eight of her. Mr.
who occupied the seat for which the former
have given one of his ears, and whom he now

saw for the first time, he inwardly wished a long way further off than Shoreham.

"Mr. Gingerly," cried Mrs. Bustle, "as I know you are a lady's man, I have reserved *that* seat for you. You are fortunate to-day in having a lady on each side of you."

This she uttered in a tone of patronage: at the same time pointing to a vacant chair between Gingerly's prime horrors—Old Widow Swillswallow and Miss Fubsworth. Damper was placed next to Widow Waddilove.

"Come, Mr. G." mumbled Miss Fubsworth, "come between us ladies. We old folks are always best together."

The earth did not open and swallow Mr. Gingerly at a gulp, as he wished it might; for at the moment of the utterance of these words his eyes met those of Miss Bustle.

The dinner was provided with the usual boarding-house munificence. First, was served a huge white earthenware tureen, full to the brim of a thin, but keen-coloured liquid, on the surface of which floated a few chips of toasted bread. Mrs. Bustle, as she distributed this in copious portions amongst the company, commended her cook for her culinary ability in general, but chiefly praised her for the excellence of her "gravy-soup."

"The only good gravy-soup in all Brighton!"

Popper; "and I'm just waiting to hear you say the contrary."

The proposition, uttered with an unquestionable air, was universally granted: at least, nobody said the contrary.

There were three soles to be divided amongst fifteen persons. This seemed to be a difficult operation, but Mrs. Bustle performed it with a degree of dexterity which would have done honour to the waiters of any boarding-house in England. Two or three times, in the course of her occupation, she took occasion to say that this was "the poorest fish-day she had ever known in Brighton."

"I had only three soles in the market—barring the other three we let go to the Pavilion," said the Captain.

Next appeared, at one end of the table, a roast leg of mutton; and, at the other, a dish containing eight or ten mutton-chops—very broad and very thin, with long tails of fat and gristle depending from the narrow ends of them. These were interlarded with thick slices of raw onion, and were described by Mrs. Bustle as "Cutlets *ally* sauce [illegible]—a dish for which her cook was "particularly famous!"

"*Famous!*" responded the Captain. "You may say *peckong*, Madam! and I don't think there's anybody here will contradict *that*."

The dinner was completed by an enormous [look-

ing] gooseberry-pie, which derived its name from the half-pint of gooseberries discovered at the bottom of the dish when, after some difficulty, a breach had been effected through the thick, hard crust over the top of it; together with twelve stringy radishes, one lettuce divided into quarters, and a small glass bowlful of lumps of yellow-looking cheese, of mouse-trap size and M'Adam substance.

"Shy fare again to-day!" muttered a quiet little gentleman at table.

"Shy what, Sir!" exclaimed the Captain. "What's shy, Sir? And, by the powers! is it 'shy' you are saying?"

"I—I only spoke, Captain," mildly replied the gentleman.

"I'm satisfied, Sir," said Captain O'Popper.

"I declare, Mr. Gingerly," said Mrs. Bustle, "you have eaten no dinner: I really believe you are in love."

Gingerly was preparing a languishing look for the especial service of Miss Betsy, when the effort was paralyzed by the Captain:——

"Mr. Gingerly in love! ha, ha, ha! At his time of life! Ha, ha, ha! Well!—better late than never, eh! my old Trojan? Ah! those sheep's eyes of your own, Daddy Gingerly! I say, Miss Tabitha worth!—Mrs. Swillswallow!—take care of your hearts, ladies. Or, come, Daddy; is it Mrs. Wardle love you may happen to be after?"

"I must desire—" said [illegible] as dignified an air as his [illegible] and vexation would allow)—
[illegible] Sir, I——"

The Captain, a good-natured man at heart, perceiving that he had given pain, apologized—though [illegible] better intention than tact.

"Gingerly, Sir; I'm sorry you have taken [illegible] what I meant only in joke." [Mr. Gingerly bowed, and the Captain continued.] "I was [illegible] though, and I'm prepared to confess it." [Mr. Gingerly bowed again.] "I had no right [illegible] a freedom with a perfect gentleman like you, Sir"—[Mr. Gingerly bowed almost down to the [illegible]—"who are old enough to be my grandfather;"—[Mr. Gingerly did *not* bow.]—"and I ask your pardon."

[illegible] maid-servants coming into the room with the [illegible]—one bringing a plate of apples, and the [illegible] a plate of biscuits!—diverted the attention of [illegible] company from the affair; and Mr. Gingerly availed himself of that opportunity to be seized [illegible] a fit of coughing, and to cover his face with [illegible] handkerchief. When he had recovered from [illegible] he had the gratification of hearing the [illegible] portion of a conversation between Mr. [illegible] and Miss Bustle. As it was carried on in [illegible] under-tone he overheard no more of it than is [illegible] reported.

"Now, don't deny it, George."

"*Paw* my life, not the slightest ideor."

"I'm certain * * * because * * * Fitz-Eustaceville * * * slip of paper * * * if any one else had *dared*, the consequences would * * * Captain O'Popper * * * style of the thing * * * so like you, you creature!"

"If you won't believe me I can't help * * * *Paw* my honour * * * piece of im*paw*tinence * * * horsewhip * * * really not the least ideor."

"Now, it's of no use, George * * * sweetly pretty * * * I knew you'd deny it * * * if you were to swear it I wouldn't * * * folly to deny * * * you have a right, dear George, and of course * * * been any one else * * * insolent monster! * * * delicate attention."

"* * * will think so, why, aw, * * *"

"Now, that's quite sufficient to * * * O, George! * * * elegant expedient * * * fully appreciated * * * even had I ever given you cause to doubt; but, *now* * * * susceptible heart * * * so *very* delicate an attention * * * yes, dear George, for ever!"

Could there have been the smallest doubt upon any disinterested mind as to the *filling-up* of this short conversation, or to the terms upon which it implied the whisperers to stand in relation to each other, it must have been removed by the unequivocal twist with which Mr. Hobnill indulged his mustachios at its conclusion. But Gingerly was

think rationally. How could He complained of the op- of the heat; expressed his conviction thermometer must suddenly have risen from to a hundred; drew his handkerchief pocket, and wiped the perspiration from bald head. The next minute he wondered made him feel so cold. Damper recom- him to leave the room. It was not the however, that produced these extraordinary in him; it was part of the company.

lovers, like drowning men, will catch at the chance of salvation. "I will have proof relative than this," mentally ejaculated he. thought him of the torn paper in Zadig, one of which, when read by itself, was a cutting but, when joined to the other, the whole out to be nothing more than an innocent poem. "So may it be in this case," thought there was something which, certainly, was quite agreeable in what I did hear; but had I all that passed it would have been a different And, hereupon, he rubbed his hands and to Damper that they should have a bottle together.

wine was brought; and, according to the fashion of boarding-houses, it played pen- across the table, vibrating between him and his partner.

And did he not invite the ladies on either side of him to take wine? No. And out of this shameful neglect of them, he drew occasion for a delicate hint as to the real direction which his affections had taken. He filled a glass, gave it to a servant, and, in a hesitating, indistinct way, said something to her; at the same time pointing in the direction where Miss Bustle was placed. The girl crossed the room, and stood, with the salver in her hand, between the young lady (who was intently occupied in paring an apple) and Mr. Hobnill. To Ginjawberry this was an awful moment. He felt that he was committing a declaration. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth: not a syllable could be utter. He screwed his lips up to the circumference of a pin-hole, looked hearts and darts, but dared not, for some time, raise his eyes from the table; and when, at length, he did, they met those of Mr. Hobnill!

"You are vastly *pawlite*. With great pleasure," said Mr. Hobnill, as he took the glass. "Your good health, Mr. Ginjawberry."

Ere Mr. Ginjawberry (as he was miscalled by his rival) had recovered from the shock occasioned by the failure of this delicate little attention (to say nothing of his horror at seeing his wine swallowed by the man of all others for whom he could sincerely have wished it had been poison), Miss Betsy had finished her operation on the apple.

"said she, as she presented it to
t I done it nicely for you?"
you do *must* be nicely done," replied
fawning.
Gingery, that is so like you: you do say
elegant things."
swallowed the glass of wine which stood
filled again and swallowed that; filled
would have done the same thing had not
Damper, who had observed him, proposed that they
walk.
who had caught the word, intimated to
mamma that, as she had not been out all day,
should like a walk. Gingerly, emboldened
he could not help considering as a delicate
on the part of the young lady, and, perhaps,
somewhat less diffident by the wine he
asked permission to offer the young lady
arm.
," said Mrs. Bustle.
was on his legs in an instant; and cast
at his friend Damper, which, literally inter-
meant, "What is your opinion of affairs
?"
"Oh, dear, mamma!" exclaimed Miss Betsy,
! only think!—The idea, you know!"
nonsense, my love!" replied Mrs. Bustle;
can be no sort of impropriety in your walk-
Mr. Gingerly."

"Confound her impudence!" muttered Gingerly.

"None in the least, Betsy," said the Captain; "it is not as if——"

"Captain O'Popper," said Gingerly, eagerly interrupting him, as if apprehensive of a disagreeable conclusion to the speech; "Captain O'Popper, I—a—Miss Bustle and I—a——" Then turning to Hobnill, he said, in a taking-it-for-granted tone, and with somewhat of an air of triumph, "You are going back to Shoreham, Sir."

"*Paw* my life," replied Hobnill (half addressing himself to Betsy)—"*Paw* my life, I hardly—I am not *paw*sitively obliged, but——"

"No, no, George," said Betsy; "there is no occasion for your returning to-night. Come and take *one* turn with this gentleman and me on the chain-pier; and when we have brought him safe home again I shall want you to walk with me to my Aunt Heathfield's, at Preston."

"I am afraid, my love," said the considerate mamma, "you will be too tired to go to Preston this evening if you walk much now."

"So I should, mamma," eagerly replied Miss Bustle; "so I think I had better walk by-and-by instead. Hadn't *we*, George?"

"Tired!" exclaimed the Captain. "It's most ridiculous for *young* people to talk about being tired. What is it you are made of? Why, look at Mr. Gingerly, there! He does not appear to be very

[illegible] yet I dare say he, even at his [illegible] contrive to walk that much."

[illegible] Gingerly seized with a fit of coughing, [illegible] compelled him to conceal his face with his [illegible]

"I hope, my dear Gingerly," said Damper to [illegible] they were taking a stroll along the Marine [illegible] "I hope that, by what you have observed this afternoon, you are cured of your folly. I speak to you as a friend, and with a friend's freedom. I observed all that passed, though, for want of opportunity, I made no remark to you upon it. 'Tis plain the girl likes that vulgar puppy, that impudent attorney-ling, and looks on him as an Apollo upon earth. Rely on it you have not a chance. You have his black bushy head, huge whiskers, and [illegible] mustachios, together with your own super-abundant thirty-odd years against you. So give it up, my dear fellow; like a sensible man, give it up at once."

"No," replied Gingerly; "I am more determined upon the point than before. The affair is taking decidedly the turn I could have wished. I did not expect her to surrender at the first shot—I should have been disgusted if she had done so. But her [illegible]! her modesty! Did you not observe her [illegible] acquiescence in my invitation to a walk?"

"'Timid acquiescence,' you call it! Unequivocal [illegible]."

"Maiden coyness, I tell you. And then that natural little piece of girlish hypocrisy, resorted to for the purpose of concealing her *real* feelings. Did you mark that? I mean her *pretending* to prefer a walk with that insignificant, impertinent, ill-bred, vulgar ——! D—n the ugly rascal!—Damper; if Mrs. Bustle allows fellows of that sort to sit down at her table, no gentleman will remain in her house. We'll go home at once and tell her so. No, no; George Gingerly is not the man to give in to a rival of *that* stamp."

"Go on, if you will," said Damper; "but the farther you proceed the more uncomfortable will you find yourself."

"By dint of delicate attentions," said Gingerly, "I'll carry her against the world!"

"And well have your 'delicate attentions' already served you!" exclaimed the consoling Damper. "The first—the book—has turned to the advantage of the amiable Mr. George Hobnill, who, spite of his own resolute abnegation, is enjoying the entire credit of it."

"Not he," replied Gingerly; "a coarse-minded fellow like that, would never be suspected of anything half so elegant. Though—ahem!—it is possible I may have cut that a little too fine; but the second—the wine—what say you to that? Fifty guineas to a shilling, if that Hobnill, or Hobbs, or whatever his vulgar name may be, had not sent

[illegible] every moment when——but I'll [illegible] if I meet him again. I'll overwhelm him with ridicule, and break his heart that [illegible] I'll call him Hobnail!"

[illegible] half past nine. They returned to their [illegible] at Mrs. Bustle's. In the drawing-room [illegible] the captain and Mrs. Bustle in one [illegible] playing cribbage; and in another was the [illegible] gentleman, fast asleep, with a newspaper [illegible] knees. Reclining on a sofa was a youngish man, evidently dressed *at* some leader of fashion [illegible] unquestionably knew what he himself was about; whilst the costume of the imitator, approaching, though but very little, towards caricature, showed that he (the imitator) did not. This [illegible] was engaged in picking his teeth; and [illegible] employment) skimming a new novel [illegible] had just procured from a circulating-[illegible]. For the benefit of future readers, as well [illegible] exhibit his own fine taste and profound judg-[illegible] he occasionally made a pencil-note on the [illegible]. These notes were brief, but pithy: as, [illegible] stuff!" "Not so bad!" "You don't say so!" [illegible] wouldn't wonder!" "*Tolarible* good!" "*Abom-*[illegible] bad!" The commentator was afterwards [illegible] to be one of the "Sweetly-pootty-petturn-[illegible] gentlemen from the Emporium of Fashion [illegible] Regent Street. But the principal group in the [illegible] consisted of four elderly ladies in petticoats,

and three other old women in trousers, who were squabbling at a game of penny-loo, and, in the best-bred way imaginable, accusing each other of cheating!

Gingerly looked around him in the hope of finding Miss Betsy, but she was not present. "Then," thought he, "she is fatigued by her walk, and has retired for the night."

As the clock struck ten, the captain, addressing Mrs. Bustle, said—

"This is rather too late for Betsy to be out."

"Not at all," replied Mrs. Bustle; "George, you know, is with her."

A certain athletic Irish officer in the Life Guards, whose nerves were not easily disordered, said, when endeavouring to illustrate the effect produced upon him by some sudden and terrible shock, "It threw me into such a state (and truth compels me to confess it) that, by Jasus! you might have knocked me down with a poker!" An instrument of much less power would have served to prostrate Mr. Gingerly upon hearing the words uttered by Mrs. Bustle.

Five minutes passed away—ten—fifteen—twenty—but no Betsy appeared! Gingerly now counted the time by seconds, and each second appeared to him an hour. He went to the window and peeped—he went to the door and listened. His bald head was steaming—he consulted the thermometer, and was astonished to find that it indicated no more than 60°.

[illegible] o'clock, Miss Betsy, accompanied by her George, returned.

"And how did you find your Aunt Heathfield?" inquired Mrs. Bustle.

"Quite well, mamma. And I have promised to go to her on Saturday and remain till Monday. And George is to come and take me there; and then he is to come over and pass the Sunday with us; and then George is to come on Monday and bring me home again. And, oh mamma! cousin Milly is quite home from school, for good; and she is so delighted with George!—now don't deny it, George, dear, you know it's true—indeed, I told her that, if I was not *certain*, I should be jealous."

"Come, Gingerly," whispered Damper to him, "go to bed."

But Gingerly was riveted to the spot.

"And, oh mamma!" continued the young lady; "we went into M'Seedling's nursery, and saw such beautiful flowers! George insisted upon buying some for me. I chose three myrtles, three jessamines, three red roses, and three such beautiful white rose trees! But they would not sell them for less than a guinea and a half; and though they are pretty dears, I would not allow him to give so much for them. A guinea and a half again, indeed! That would be too much."

"Too much!" exclaimed the captain; "by the

Powers! and I think so, too. He had better save his money for the *occasion*."

Again Damper whispered his friend, "To bed."

"Well," said Betsy, "I have such a passion for flowers, that scatter the road with them and I'm sure it would lead to my heart."

Gingerly's countenance brightened.

"Come," said he to Damper (at the same time rubbing his hands), "I *will* go to bed."

He wished "good night" generally. "Good night to *you*, Mister—Hob-*nail*," said he to his rival; and brought up with a significant "ahem!" But no effect was produced by the perpetration of this heart-breaking affair.

"Good night, Mr. Ginjawbread," replied Hobnill; and there was a general laugh.

Utterly confused, bowing very low, placing his hand upon his heart, and attempting to look—a look!—he stammered forth, "May light shine—Miss Bet—I mean, Miss Eliz—Miss—May your downy pil—Oh! Miss Bets—goo—good afternoon."

He left the room; and as he closed the door he fancied he heard a titter, and something about "sheep's eyes." When he had reached his room he rang for a servant, to whom he gave particular orders to call him at five o'clock.

Seven o'clock of the following morning found Gingerly at M'Seedling's nursery. The plan

[illegible] neglected by the charming Miss [illegible] in a place apart, exactly where she had left them. As he beheld them Gingerly's [illegible]

"What is your price for these plants?" inquired Gingerly.

"Maybe ye're wanting them, Sir," said M'Seedling; if so, ye 'll no find their like within ten mile [illegible]

"What is the price of them?" repeated Gingerly.

"I refused thirty-five shillings for them yesterday, which was offered me by a young *mee*litary gentleman and his wife, as I guess."

"D—n the military gentleman!" impatiently exclaimed Gingerly; who, although he knew how [illegible] was that M'Seedling had actually demanded for his plants, yet he did not choose, by correcting the man's memory, to expose his own knowledge of what had occurred on the previous evening. "D—n the military gentleman! What do you ask for that lot of plants?"

"Weel, Sir," replied the nurseryman; "I 'm just asking' I canna in conscience tak' less than twa pounds."

Gingerly's hand was instantly in his pocket.

"There," added the wily professor of the most indolent and most ancient calling on earth.

Gingerly paid the man the sum he demanded,

though not without a passing reflection in his own mind on the unsettled meaning of the term 'exact science.'

"Now," said Gingerly, "I have paid you handsomely for these things, and I shall expect in return that my instructions will be strictly attended to concerning the delivery of them. They must be left at Mrs. Bustle's boarding-house, at Brighton, at half-past nine precisely. Should the carrier be asked who sent them, he must say he doesn't know. He must simply leave the plants, and, along with them, this card."

Saying which, he took a card from his pocket, and, having scratched through his own name so carefully as to allow of its being read, he wrote on the other side:—

"These, the fairest of the vegetable creation, for the fairest of the human creation."

"There!" thought Gingerly, as he retraced his steps to Brighton; "I think, my *military* gentleman, I have now done *your* business for you. This talk about strewing the road to her heart with flowers was pretty plain: and I have strewed it to the tune of two-pound-ten. The card is ingeniously contrived, though sending it is a bold step certainly; but it will prevent mistake. At any rate, Master Hobnail, you shall not smuggle my trophies this time. 'These, the fairest of the vegetable creation, to the fairest of the human creation!' That's

attorney's clerk, I flatter myself. A and elegantly contrived!"

best known to himself, Gingerly, on occasion, took his breakfast at Har- Hotel. His walk had given him an appetite, inflicted, in all its vigour, upon the cold and ham, and eggs, and shrimps, and rolls, attentive master of that most comfortable caused to be placed before him. This he returned to Mrs. Bustle's; and ap- in the eating-room just as the general was served. The party consisted of the persons as were assembled at dinner on the before, and, as upon that occasion, Hobnill was next to Miss Betsy. Gingerly was so fortu- to find a chair immediately opposite to his and next to him was his friend Damper.

"Don't you take anything, Mr. Gingerly?" said Bustle to him, after he had sat some time un- at table.

"I——I'll take half a cup of weak tea, thank you, Madam," replied he, in a tender tone, and with a

"But don't you eat anything, Sir?"

"I——I have no appetite," was the reply, and the same accompaniments.

"Then, decidedly you *are* in love," continued the lady.

By the most fortunate concurrence of circumstances — (fortunate for Gingerly's cause) — even

whilst Mrs. Bustle was uttering these words, Jenny, one of the maids, entered the room.

"Please, mum," said Jenny, "hasn't nobody ordered no flowers to be sent here?"

Gingerly turned pale, and his heart beat against his side as if it would have jumped through his waistcoat.

"Not that I am aware of," replied Mrs. Bustle. And, having looked inquiringly round the table without receiving any reply, she continued: "No, Jenny; it is a mistake; they are not for anybody here."

Jenny went out, but presently returned.

"Please, mum," said Jenny, "the man says he is sure on it as how they are for here; he says Mrs. Bustle's boarding-house, quite distinct; and he had a card to leave along with them, only he had the misfortune to lose it by the way, which, howsomever isn't of no consequence, as he has found the house without it."

Gingerly's heart sank in his bosom.

"Do go, Betsy, my love, and see what all this is about," said Mrs. Bustle.

Betsy obeyed. Scarcely had she left the room, when, with eyes sparkling with joy, she bounded in again.

"Oh, George! she exclaimed; "how very foolish of you! It is a delicate attention, truly delicate, indeed! but you shouldn't have done it."

"Done it! done what?" inquired George.

[illegible] it is of you to pretend astonishment, George, indeed.—Go, Jenny, and see those flowers taken very carefully up into my room.—Oh, William, they are such loves!—It is very foolish of you, George; but, certainly, never anything in my life gave me half so much pleasure!"

"Upon my life, Betsy, I'm *paw*fectly ignorant of what you mean," said Hobnill.

"You ridiculous creature! where is the use of your denying it, when they are the very plants, every one of them, which I selected last night, and you tried to bargain for."

"I solemnly declar——."

"What's the meaning of all this?" exclaimed Captain O'Popper. "If you didn't send Betsy those plants, Mr. George, why, somebody else did; and that somebody else has the smallest right in the universal world to take such a liberty, that other somebody, whoever he may be, is an impertinent fellow. There's a bit of logic for you. But I'll beat about till I discover who this somebody is; and then we shall see whether Mr. Somebody or Captain O'Popper is the best man at ten paces."

"Lord, Sir!" said Betsy, "it *is* George. Now—only hold your tongue, George, and don't deny it, unless you 'd make me very angry. I knew them every one again the instant I saw them. Besides," added she (at the same time bestowing upon him a

[illegible]

tender look, and gently placing the tips of her delicate fingers on his arm)—"besides, dear George, it is so completely your style of thing!"

George, finding denial to be in vain, relinquished the contest. He looked at his watch, rose from table, and announced the necessity of his return to Shoreham.

"That 's something, and be hanged to him!" thought Gingerly.

"And *must* you go back this morning, George?" inquired Betsy. "Well, if you must——But just stop a moment."

She ran out of the room, and, after the lapse of a few minutes, returned with a handful of flowers.

"Here, George," she said (as she placed some of them in his button-hole, and put the others, carefully made up in a sheet of writing-paper, into his hand), "take these. I plucked some of the most beautiful of them for you, for no one has a better right to them than *you*. Good bye, George!—And, George, be sure you come back to dinner to-day, for I shall want you to walk with me to Aunt Heathfield's again this evening."

The feelings of poor Gingerly, during this scene, may be (to use a phrase, the originality of which is not insisted upon) more easily conceived than described. The rival having fairly taken his departure, Gingerly rose from his seat, walked to the

[illegible] to the table, resumed his seat, [illegible] towards the fire place, once more to the [illegible] to the door, and—out he rushed.

[illegible] ill?" said Mrs. Bustle to Damper.

"I fear so," replied Damper; "I 'll follow him." Damper knew very well the cause of his friend's disorder.

Damper sought Gingerly all over the house, but he was nowhere to be found. He then went out—passed the Marine Parade—traversed the Steyne—East Cliff—West Cliff—up one street—down another—looked into all the libraries—but to no purpose. He neither saw, nor could he hear anything of, Gingerly. He became alarmed. He went to the chain-pier, and walked, hurriedly, to the end of it. But there was no Gingerly! "Can he have been so rash?" exclaimed Damper. One of the men belonging to the pier was sitting smoking a pipe on the [illegible] gun. Damper approached him. With some hesitation Damper said, "Pray—pray, my good friend—have you seen an elderly gentleman throw himself into the sea within these two hours?"

The man deliberately took his pipe from his mouth, did what smokers are in the habit of doing on such an occasion, and, after leisurely scratching his head, said—

"An elderly gentleman, sir?—Let me see!—an elderly gentleman. Why—a—no, sir, I can't say as I have. But if I should see e'er a one throw him-

self into the sea in the course of the afternoon, where shall I have the pleasure of letting you know?"

Damper retraced his steps, and soon, to his great joy, met Gingerly. The latter allowed him no time to speak, but thus, at once, accosted him:—

"It is awful! truly awful! Would you believe it? That rascally attorney's clerk who walked off with those flowers—with the credit of the little act of gallantry, too—they were my flowers—it was I who sent them."

"I would have sworn it," replied Damper. "To repeat Miss Betsy's words, it was 'so completely your style of thing.' But let me congratulate you on finding you alive: I began to fear you had committed some desperate act."

"Why, no, I have not yet done so. An ingenious expedient has occurred to me;—I'll try it—I don't think it can fail, for the dear girl has a great deal of feeling."

"True," replied Damper; "but not one particle for you. Be wise, book a place in the four o'clock coach, and return to town. All your ingenious expedients, all your delicate attentions, have turned to the advantage of the interesting Hobaill; and mark my word for it, that——"

"I won't listen to anything you can say," cried Gingerly, interrupting him. "This *cannot* fail—at least if you will second me in it."

For some time Damper refused to have anything

[illegible] affair; but, upon Gingerly's [illegible] should his next delicate attention be [illegible] than the others, he would abandon [illegible] of the fair Betsy, and return to his [illegible] in Lyon's inn, Damper undertook to [illegible]. Thus pledged, he listened patiently to [illegible] instructions; the result of which is now [illegible].

"You seem agitated, Mr. Damper," said Betsy, [illegible] sitting alone in the drawing-room when he [illegible].

"Why, the fact is, Miss Bustle—I—I am afraid [illegible] you with it, but sooner or later you must [illegible]," replied Damper, who was almost ashamed of the ridiculous commission he had undertaken.

"Good heavens! what has happened?" exclaimed [illegible].

"Why—this morning, a gentleman, a *certain* gentleman, went into Folthorpe's library. Scarcely [illegible] entered, when he heard another gentleman [illegible] your name in a way not altogether respectful. This, the gentleman,—that is to say, the *certain* gentleman,—could not endure. He struck the [illegible], a challenge ensued; within an hour afterwards they met on the Downs; exchanged shots; and the gentleman, your champion, was wounded."

"Wounded! who was it?" inquired Miss Bustle.

"Now comes the trial, thought Damper.

"It is one," said he, "who takes the deepest inte-

rest in every thing that concerns you. In short—for the circumstances of the case compel me to speak out—he entertains for you the most unbounded affection; and, as you already possess his heart, he has authorized me to——"

Betsy Bustle fainted! Damper rang the bell violently. In a moment there was Mrs. Bustle, *sal volatile*, Captain O'Popper, hartshorn, George Hobnill, burnt brown paper, and all the lodgers. In the midst of the confusion Gingerly (with a lackadaisical air, and his left arm in a sling), entered the room, and stood, unperceived, behind the crowd which was pressing about the fair fainter. Not a little delighted was he at the effect produced by this, his last and most ingenious expedient.

"Betsy, my child, what *is* the matter?" cried Mrs. Bustle.

"Betsy, my de*or*, what *is* the matter?" echoed George.

Either these sounds, or the burnt brown paper, or the hartshorn, or the *sal volatile*, or perhaps, the suffocating pressure of the persons about her—a circumstance inevitable on occasions of this nature—revived her. She opened her eyes; and the first object she beheld was George, kneeling at her side, and officiating as administerer of the burnt brown paper aforesaid. She burst into a flood of tears: as soon as she was sufficiently recovered to speak, she threw herself into his arms, and exclaimed,—

"Oh, George! how *could* you be so foolish as to expose your dear, your precious life, on my account? Had anything fatal happened to you, I should have gone distracted! But whereabouts are you wounded?"

"Wounded!" exclaimed George, in utter amazement; "wounded! What an ide*or*! *Paw* my honour I'm not."

"Now don't deceive me, George; let me know the worst. But your endeavouring to conceal it from me is so like you! It is so *very* delicate. Oh, mamma! after this, can you refuse to ——?"

"I understand you, my dear child: you have my consent; and, with the consent of George's parents, the banns shall be published on Sunday."

"George," said the captain, "I didn't think you had so much spirit in you. But you are a brave fellow; so, as to the consent, by the powers! I say ditto to that. And Mrs. Bustle," said he in a whisper to the lady, "as we are both in a consenting mood, let us consent to marry one another at the same time."

"Oh, captain!" was the lady's laconic, but expressive reply.

Gingerly, pale, and trembling from head to foot with rage and disappointment, was about to rush forward and explain; but he was restrained by an admonitory gesture from his friend.

"My dear Gingerly," said Damper (taking him

aside); "remember your promise: the four o'clock coach and Lyon's inn. Keep your own counsel: so shall you appear ridiculous in the eyes of none but of an old and trusty friend. Your ingenious contrivances, from first to last, have all turned to the advantage of your rival; nor have you the credit of having even suspected of the smallest of them. If you are resolved to marry, say '*Will you?*' to the first woman you may happen to meet; for, rely on it, at your time of life, you are not likely to entrap a female heart by DELICATE ATTENTIONS."

*** Upon this story I afterwards grounded a two-act farce, which, in spite of many impediments in the form of bad acting and of the worst of Managements, was, for many nights, acted with considerable success. J. P.

SIR HURRY SKURRY.

A CHARACTER.

Sir Hurry Skurry has for many years of his life been running after his business without ever yet overtaking it: somehow or another, he allowed it to get a week's start of him, and it has kept it. He is not a willing procrastinator, neither is he indolent or idle: he is, on the contrary, so unceasingly busied that he can scarcely afford himself time to do anything. To his friends, and to others concerned with him, the inconveniences resulting from the hopeless chase in which he is engaged seldom assume a more formidable shape than that of slight and temporary vexation; against any serious cause of dissatisfaction they have a safeguard in his known and unquestionable integrity; but for himself, restless anxiety and toil, which will admit of no respite, are his portion. Would he attempt less he might accomplish more, you will tell him: he will eagerly seize the hint, and

promise to consider it at his first leisure opportunity. A little more of order and method in his arrangements might soon bring him abreast with, if not in advance of, his affairs: he will acknowledge that that is the very course he must pursue, when he can find time to pursue it. Do one thing at a time, and think of nothing else till you have done it: that he will admit to be excellent advice; if he could but get a single half hour to himself he would act upon it at once; but, at present, he is so busy that, really, he has not time to do any one thing.

The other morning I paid Sir Hurry a visit.

"Is your master at home, Ridgway?" said I to his valet.

"Yes, sir," replied the man, "my master is at home, but he is very busy. Besides, sir, the carriage is at the door, as you see, waiting to take him into the City on some very particular business. Indeed, sir, my master is so *very* busy that, though the carriage has been here these three hours—ever since two o'clock—he has not been able to get out yet."

"Then I will take some other opportunity of calling," said I.

"But, sir," continued the servant, interrupting me as I was descending the steps, "you had better let me to let Sir Hurry know you are here. I can say he will be glad to see *you* for a minute, or so, for though he *is* so busy."

I was ushered into the library, where I found the

(like Solomon) in all his glory. In the centre of the room, which is spacious, was a large table; in the centre of it was a large [illegible]; and in other parts were three or four [illegible] smaller dimensions: all these, together with the sofas, settees, and many of the chairs, were loaded with books, papers, and letters—some of the latter in piles, some tied up in bundles, some (vastly far the greater number) scattered loosely about. Sir Hurry was dressed partly for going out—that is to say, he had on his waistcoat and trousers, and one boot—and partly for staying at home, for he also had on one slipper and his dressing-gown. His chin was covered with lather, in his right hand was a razor, and in his left a piece of toast. From the steamless and silent tea-urn (that most abominable appendage, when hissing and steaming, to a breakfast table on a hot morning in July) and the appearance of the cream as it floated on the surface of his full cup of tea, it was easy to infer that his breakfast had been served long ago, and had grown cold. When I entered the room Sir Hurry was walking rapidly about, first to one table, then to another, looking at the confused mass that lay upon each; and, from time to time, casting his eyes upwards to the ceiling, and raising his hands (furnished as I have said) in an agony of despair, as it were, above his head. Sir Hurry opened the conversation; which I must premise by observing that he is generally so

busy as rarely to be able to spare himself time to complete a sentence. On seeing me he exclaimed—

"Ha! I'm glad to—really I am so busy I have hardly time to say how d'ye——but, never mind; sit down just for a minute. How I ever shall get through all this I really don't——"

"Then, Sir Hurry, I'll come and see you some other day."

"Yes—no—sit down just for a——everything a whole week behind-hand—I'm certain it would drive me out of my mind if I had time to——but, really, I am so busy that I haven't time to think about that. But sit down and—yes—well——"

"Then shave, or take your breakfast, and I may talk to you the while, without interrupting your occupation."

Sir Hurry took a seat at the breakfast table, and I followed his example.

"Yes—breakfast—I assure you that ever since nine o'clock this morning——well, I must, really—but when I look at that mass of—no—yes—breakfast—I must."

Here he raised his right hand, which happened to be the wrong one for the occasion; for certainly I am that, but for my timely interference, the razor would have gone into his mouth instead of the

"Do one thing at a time, Sir Hurry; you had better first shave yourself."

"Now just look there at what I have to do,

[illegible] whether—yes—I'll shave, and [illegible]

Here, with a corner of his napkin, he wiped the lather from his chin, and proceeded:—

"The tea stone-cold, I declare! Now, really, this is too—the discomfort, the—I do assure you my time is so taken up that I can't even——well, it will never be otherwise till—yes, seriously, I must endeavour to find time to do *that*."

"To do what?"

"What you suggested to me—yes—I perceive its expediency; and, really, now, I will set apart an hour to turn it over in my mind—'Do one thing at a time'—yes, that must be my plan as soon as I can find time for it. Yet if you did but know—it is so, I assure you. Well—breakfast—that *must* be—but if I could explain to you how I am worried by all these——"

Here he took up his shaving-brush, and, having re-lathered one side of his face, put it down again, and went to a table on which lay a heap of open letters.

"Now, see here: two-and-thirty letters to answer! some of them more than a week—Now, how, in the name of goodness! am I to find time even to—it is enough to drive one out of one's—two-and-thirty! and which of them to answer first I really don't—yes, it is so, I assure you."

"Then answer the first that may happen to be

before you, then the next, and so on; that plan will, at least, relieve you from the perplexities of indecision."

"Well, really, I think that if I were to—yes, that is the plan I must adopt the very moment I return from—but when I can spare time to get there is more than I can tell, for you can form no notion of the quantity of things—yes, it is so, I assure you."

"'The very moment you return from'!—from whence? and where is it you purpose going?"

"Yes—that's it—by-the-by, I have not told you about that." (Once more he wiped the soapy side of his face and resumed his seat.) "It is a step I am advised to take—my oldest and best friends assure me there is nothing in the world so likely to—yes, I am satisfied upon that point: it will be greatly to my advantage. But, only think! it is a hundred and thirty miles from town, and even if I could fly there, the time it would take to——then, look here." (He rose and went to another table.) "I have not yet had time to read over the settlements—see! eleven skins! — not even looked at them—how is it possible I should, when there is such a mass of other things to——and then, again, four letters this very week on the subject from her father, Sir Hildebrand Spriggs—yes, *they* must be answered. Excuse me for five minutes; I'll write to him at once. Now where are those letters? Not

here—nor here—bless my soul!—no—yes—bless my soul!—nor here. How is it possible to find them amidst this appalling accumulation of——it will drive me out of my—yes, I know it will. Or, stop—no—yes, I'll dress and go into the city before I do any——Now, Ridgway, what is it you—come, quick, quick, tell me—you see how busy—well, what is it?"

This was addressed to his servant, who came to inquire whether Sir Hurry had any orders to give about dinner.

"Dinner! now, really, I declare to goodness this is enough to—you see how I am pressed for time, and yet you—look at those tables, look at these heaps of—how am I to spare a moment to think about—yes, mutton-chops—no—mutton-chops—yes—anything—I hardly know which way to turn, and yet you—never mind, go; I shall have no time to eat any dinner to-day—positively, it is enough to—yes, it is indeed."

"I believe you know the carriage is waiting, Sir," said the man.

"There, now—it is enough to provoke a——where is the use of detaining—I have ten thousand things to do at home this morning, so how is it possible for me to think of going into the——I declare to goodness it is already two o'——call me at five to-morrow morning, and let the carriage be at the door at six,

and——I shall never get through what I have to——yes, go."

"I am confident, Sir Harry," said I, "that everything you have to do you may accomplish with comparatively little trouble to yourself, and no uneasiness, provided you will adopt a plan which I shall take the liberty of suggesting to you."

"Yes—well, now—quick, for really, I——"

"Well, then: throw all those papers into a waggon, and send them down to your quiet house in the country; do you follow them *instanter*. Then, quietly and leisurely—no hurry, no bustle, remember—but leisurely put them in order; diminishing the quantity, as much as you can, by throwing aside all such as have no positive claim to your attention. Allow nothing, nothing whatever, to divert you from this portion of your task till it be accomplished. Then, quietly, take up one of the number—any one, but, remember! only one at a time—forgetting, if possible, that there is any other one upon earth—and quietly to do with it what is requisite to be done; then, quietly, take another, and another, and another. I will allow you eight, nay, if you chose, ten hours daily for work, and six or seven for rest; but I shall insist upon your devoting the remainder to recreation. This plan, rigidly followed to the end, will soon bring you side by side with your affairs. That accomplished, never allow them to get the start of you

again, and I would bet your fortune against mine—long odds, Sir Hurry—that you will have a few hours at your own disposal every day for the rest of your life, even though your business should be doubled."

"Well—yes, that's true—but recreation—no—how can I spare time for—no, to be sure."

"Recreation! Of all the conditions, that is the one indispensable. Occasional relaxation is requisite in order to restore the spring and elasticity of your mind, which are naturally diminished by being constantly on the stretch. Thus, it is no paradox to say, that if you would do more you must do less."

"Yes; I see—that's true. Well really I must do it—yes—but I can't. I have sold my place in the country; for, really, I have so much to do that I never could spare time to get down there. Now, do but look at those frightful heaps of papers, and then tell me how, in the name of goodness——yes—it is out of the question."

"Then go down to your friend Sir Hildebrand Spriggs's."

"Sir Hildebrand Spriggs—yes, I forgot to tell you—I am engaged to marry his daughter—but just look about this room——really I can't find an hour's leisure to——yes; believe me that so it is."

"Marry, marry, by all means, Sir Hurry; and with a pretty wife, and half a dozen of pretty children about you, you will be the happiest man alive."

"Yes, I see—children—that would be delightful—yes, I should like to have—but I shall never find time to——yes, it is the fact I assure you."

"I find you are incorrigible; so I shall wish you good morning, and leave you to go on in your own way."

Il y a un dieu pour les ivrognes, saith the French proverb; which means—or is intended to mean—a tipsy bricklayer will fall from a scaffolding thirty feet high, and rise from the pavement unhurt; whilst a sober gentleman will break his leg in merely stepping out of his carriage. So would there seem to be some good Genius watching over the affairs of Sir Hurry Skurry: for whatever there be to do it is successfully done—in the end—and this, too, in spite of his own unremitting and paralyzing anxiety to do it.

JOHN HOGS.

AN AGREEABLE TRAVELLING COMPANION.

On the day prior to my departure, last summer, from the beautiful, ugly, clean, dirty, nice, nasty, elegant, filthy city of Paris, I received a visit from Madame Genevaux, the mistress of the hotel at which I usually dwelt on my occasional trips to that capital. The purpose of the lady's visit was to congratulate me upon the circumstance of my having at least one countryman as a travelling companion; for that Mr. Hogs (under which name let me disguise the party in question) had secured a place in the same vehicle. Mr. Hogs, she added, spoke not one word of French; for which reason she trusted to my complaisance that I would take charge of him, and act as his guide and interpreter. Indeed, to confess the truth, she had prevailed upon him to quit Paris a day earlier than he had intended, in

order that he might avail himself of the inestimable advantage of my assistance, and I in return enjoy the delight of his society.

Having more than once suffered great annoyance from this kind of bear-leading, I was doubting whether or not I should decline the responsibility proposed to me; but ere I could decide, Madame Genevaux had shuffled out of the room, and returned again, leading in her interesting *protégé*, John Hogs; and having introduced us to each other in the most intelligible bad English she could command, she left us together.

Mr. Hogs was a Leeds trader, who had been to America about some business, and was returning, *via* France, to his native town. He was a short, stout, clumsily-made man, with a square, flat, sunburnt face, an eye bespeaking craft and distrust, and a harsh, vulgar-toned voice. He wore a black coat and waistcoat (evidently *not* from the hand of Scales), brown breeches and gaiters, and a broad-brimmed hat; and a dark-coloured silk handkerchief was tied loosely round his neck. He stood with his feet wide apart from each other—Colossus-wise—his hands thrust down to the bottom of the pockets of the brown garment which I have once already called by its proper name, and his elbows protruding forwards. I do not intend to present him as a pattern of elegance in any way: I describe him as I found him.

"So; Missus what-d'-ye-call-her, there, with her

long-unthought-of name, tells me that me and you has took two places in the same Diligence," was the introductory speech of my intended companion.

"I understand, Sir," replied I, "that I am to have the pleasure of your company on the journey."

"Why, as to pleasure, that's as it may turn out. There's no *parly-voo* palaver about me. I'm a John Bull, every inch of me; so as to the pleasure we are like to have in one another's company, why, I'm never in a hurry to say 'yes' to what may happen to come up 'no.' 'As we're behav'd so we shall be shav'd,' is my maxim; and there's no French flummery about that, eh?"

"Not a tittle, Sir," replied I.

"No, no; you may make sure of John Hogs on that score. I've been here six days, and I've had enough on't. Place and people all alike. The nasty stuff one gets to eat, and the wishy-washy drink they gives one! And then such a lingo as they talk! Except when I've met a countryman of my own, hang me if I've understood a word that has been said since here I've been."

"Why, Mr. Hogs, if you don't understand the language, that is no fault of the people."

"Oh, pooh! pooh! who's to understand such a jargon as that? But I see how it is. You have been here so long, I suppose, that you're half a Frenchified chap yourself, and defends 'em. You'd defend *this*, perhaps—don't answer, for you can't.

When I goes to a play at Leeds, or even when I sees one in Lunnun, I knows all they 're talking about; but here——! I went last night and paid two francs and a half at one of their play-houses, but devil a word of it could I make out. It 's taking one's money on false pretences, hang me if it an't. One wouldn't mind if there was any call for it, but it's all stuff and affectation. Why can't they speak plain English as we do?"

"How, Sir!" exclaimed I, with astonishment.

"How, Sir!" echoed Hogs. "Which is furthest off from England—France or Ameriky? Tell me that, if you please."

"Why, Sir," replied I; "so far as my geographical recollections serve me, I should say America is the most distant by some thousands of miles."

"Well, then, I 'm just come from there. Now, as that's so much further off, who has the best right to speak a foreign lingo—the French or the Americans, eh? But, no, no; them 's a sensible, rational people, as has got no nonsense about 'em; and I didn't meet nobody there as didn't speak as good English as me. Aye, aye; next to us English, them 's the chaps, take my word for it. No *parly-voo* nonsense about *them:* chaps after my own heart. Before I 'd been there four-and-twenty hours, I felt myself as much at home as if I 'd been in Leeds, hang me if I didn't."

After a pause of a minute, John Hogs looked at his watch.

"One o'clock! Now, what shall I do till dinner-time? Stop!—well thought on. I haven't been to the Louvre yet to see the picturs and stattys, and, as they makes no charge for it, one may as well go. I say, Mister what's-your-name, suppose me and you goes together, eh? We shall be company for one another."

I declined the invitation.

"Well, then," continued Mr. Hogs, "I'll go alone. But what a set of bragging chaps these French is! They'd make you believe that, counting picturs and stattys, one with another, they've got nigh two thousand on 'em. But John Hogs an't the man to be done in that style. As they don't shut up till four o'clock, I shall have plenty of time to count 'em; so here goes. To-morrow at nine we starts, you know; so if me and you don't meet before, good-bye till then, Mr. what-d'-ye-call-it."

The road from Paris to Calais is not one at any point of which a traveller could honestly sing, "Oh, the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France!" and, certainly, the companion with whom I was threatened, promised no compensation for the dulness of the journey. I foresaw that my ease and comfort, during three dozen long hours, were in the power of one who was not likely to temper that power with mercy; and, but that an appointment in London of some importance rendered my departure on the following morning imperative, I would willingly have forfeited the sum I had paid for my

place in the Diligence, if by such sacrifice I could have escaped from him. But this was not to be.

Next morning, at a few minutes before nine, I took my allotted place (a corner one) in the Diligence. The opposite seat was occupied by two Frenchmen and a German; and the other corner place, on the same side with me, by another German: thus, leaving the middle seat, between the latter and myself, for Mr. John Hogs of Leeds. My fellow-travellers and I instantly entered into conversation; and in a tone which promised good fellowship amongst us for as long as we might remain together.

At the last beat of the hour of nine, the Diligence was, with its usual punctuality, about to start, when I reminded the conductor that there was yet a passenger to come. He civilly replied, that he was aware of it; but that the regulations of the *messageries* prohibited any delay beyond the appointed time for departure. Fortunately, at this moment, Mr. Hogs came running into the yard.

"Hollo! you, Sir! Conductor! What's your name! Stop! Going without me, was you? I should like to have caught you at that. I'd have trounced you for it, hang me if I wouldn't. But stop a bit." Saying which he ran into the bureau. After reiterated calls from the conductor, Hogs reappeared.

"Here's a pretty set of scoundrels!" exclaimed he. "Yesterday, that chap in the booking-office

gave me a bad franc in change, and he won't give me another for it; and I can't get neither impunity nor redress. The rascals! And when I spoke out like a free-born Englishman, and said they was all a set of cheats and rogues, they threatened me with the police. Should like to see their police meddle with John Hogs. A pretty country for a man to come to!—England or Ameriky for my money. But they shall find I am a real John Bull, and won't put up with this piece of roguery tamely. They little dream as I 've got a *nevvy* a clerk in the Foreign Office, and that the affair will come to light."

"*Mais montez-donc, Monsieur, s'il vous plait,*" said the conductor, in a tone of civil impatience, as he held open the door of the vehicle.

"*Mounty!*" cried Hogs, placing one foot on the step. "That means get in, I suppose? Then why can't you say so?—But, stop! *this* won't do. I can't ride with my back to the horses, and I can't ride *bodkin;* or, as you don't understand English, I mean I can't ride in the middle 'twixt two others."

"*Mais, Monsieur, s'il vous plait,*" again said the conductor.

"You 'll find it no play with me, if I 'm to be treated in this style, that I can tell you." Then, addressing the German, in the opposite corner, he said, "You must go to t'other side, for I can't ride backwards for love or money."

"*Che ne fous gombrends bas, Mo'zieu,*" politely said the German: "*barley-fous Frangzay?*"

"Don't parley-voo me; that won't do with John Hogs. But I say, Mister" (continued he, addressing himself to me); "I say; I wish you 'd settle this point for me. You've undertook to do the needful for me, so I look to you."

I entered upon the duties of my agreeable office by inquiring of my fellow-travellers, severally, whether they were inclined to accommodate Mr. Hogs by an exchange of seats with him; which they being unwilling to do, I explained to him that the places in a French Diligence were numbered, and that he having been the last of six persons to secure a place, the one which was reserved for him (numbered 6) was that to which alone he had a claim.

"Pooh! pooh! stuff and nonsense!" cried H
"number places in a stage-coach! the th
stand to reason. We do no such thing
and we knows as much about coachin
take it. I consider myself ill trea——
Hogs's speech was curtailed by two very
sons in blue uniforms, who, each taking
elbow, quietly lifted him into the Dilig
the door being closed upon him, we comm
journey.

Hogs grumbled audibly, ringing the cha
the terms, "French rascals," "foreign scou
"unpolite savages," "rogues," "brutes," &c.

of which being understood by our companions, they fell harmless. At length Hogs addressing himself to me, said—

"I say, Mister, I wish you 'd explain for me?"

"Explain what, Sir?"

"Why, I wish you'd just tell them chaps that they are a set of rascally, unaccommodating scoundrels, and that it would serve them right to give them a licking all round, one down and t'other come on."

This wish I did not think it prudent to gratify. I told Mr. Hogs that as, in fact, there was nothing of which he could justly complain, I certainly should not make myself a party to the affair.

"Some people's pretty chaps to stand by an ill-used countryman!" As Mr. Hogs muttered these [illegible] just loud enough, but only loud enough, to be [illegible] I thought it as well not to hear them.

[illegible]cely had we cleared the *Barrière St. Denis*, [illegible] Mr. Hogs said—"I wish, Mister, you would [illegible]ut your head out o' window and order the [illegible]man, or whatever they may call him, to push on. [illegible]ll never get to Calais at this rate, for, hang [illegible] I think he 's doing more than five mile an [illegible]"

[illegible]n, Hogs," replied I, "we are proceeding at [illegible]gulated pace, and no request on our part [illegible] might be accelerated would be attended to."

[illegible]'ouldn't it?" said my agreeable companion.

"They don't know much of John Hogs, then. What 's French for 'stop,' Mister?"

"*Arrêtez*," replied I.

In an instant Hogs's body was half through the window. "*Retty, retty, retty*, and be d—d to you," roared Hogs.

Instantly the Diligence stopped, and down came the conductor to inquire what was the matter.

"This won't do, you Sir," replied Hogs; "You must get on faster."

"*Comment, Monsieur?*" said the Conductor, with an inquiring look.

Hogs, finding that he was not clearly understood, resorted to the expedient of uttering each word distinctly, deliberately, and in a loud tone of voice:—

"You—must—drive—a—great—deal—fas—ter;"—bawling the last syllable into the man's ear as if he had been addressing one stone-deaf.

The conductor shook his head and turned to me for an explanation. I explained.

"*Ah! bah!*" said the conductor, shrugging up his shoulders; "*Il est fou, donc, ce Monsieur-là.*" And, without further parley, he resumed his seat on the *impériale*, and once more we proceeded.

Presently we were passed by a light cabriolet drawn by three horses of the *Poste-Royale*.

"This won't do," cried Hogs; and again he roared from the window, "*Retty, retty, retty!*"

Again the Diligence stopped, and down came the conductor.

"I wish, Mister," said Hogs to me, "*you* would tell the fellow what I want."

"And what is it you do want, sir?"

"Why, what I want is, that them chaps as has just passed us may just as well swallow our dust as us swallow theirs. So tell him to push on and get the start on 'em, and, when he 's got it, to keep it."

I explained to the conductor the absurd demand of Hogs; and added that he had better not again disturb himself at the call of that gentleman, unless it was confirmed by that of one of the other passengers.

"*Bien obligé, Monsieur*," said the man. "*Decidément il est fou, ce Monsieur-là.*"

Without explaining to Hogs the French posting-regulations, I merely stated to him that his wish could not be attended to, for that, in France, racing on the road was not allowed.

"A precious country to live in! But I'm a thorough John Bull, and have nothing to do with their regulations."

Again he was about to rise to call to the conductor, when I prevented him by assuring him that his appeal would be disregarded.

"Consider, sir," added I, "that we are here in a strange land, and must submit to its laws and

regulations, as we should expect a foreigner to do to ours in our own country. Here *we* are foreigners."

"Foreigners!" cried Hogs; "foreigners! I don't know what you may be, Mister; but I'm a true-born Englishman, I'm a thorough John Bull, and no foreigner. No, no; John Hogs may be where he will, but d—n me if he'll submit to be taken for a foreigner in any country in the world."

"I fear, Mr. Hogs," said I, "that you and I shall not get on very well together. Here we are at *St. Denis*, the first stage out of Paris; and it will be to our mutual comfort, for the remaining thirty-and-odd, that conversation between us should cease!"

"Come, I say! And what am I to do if I want somebody to ask for something for me, as I can't ask for myself?"

"The best you can, sir."

The two Germans beguiled the time by occasionally singing in unison an *overture!* of Mozart's, perfectly well, from beginning to end; the two Frenchmen (actors going to fulfil an engagement at Boulogne) by rehearsing the parts which they were to play together; and I, either by listening to them, or talking with them. Thus we five passed the waking hours of the journey very agreeably together, leaving JOHN HOGS in a sulky and uncomfortable minority of *one*.

STERNE IN FRANCE.

It has always been a subject of astonishment to me that, among all the travellers who have made the tour of France, not one should have devoted a page to the notice of their witty and philosophic predecessor, STERNE! While the authoress of the Canterbury Tales, as she does but approach the Kentish coast, is unable to restrain her imagination from bounding over to Calais and conjuring up the shades of Yorick and his poor Monk of St. Francis, thousands of our countrymen have stood upon the very spot where Yorick stood, and followed in his very footsteps, never remembering, in their eagerness to reach the capital, that they trod on classic ground. Not so with me. From Sterne it was that I received my earliest impressions about France and French people: it was he who first excited in me a desire to become personally acquainted with scenes and characters over which his descriptions (faithful and correct as I have since found them to be) had thrown the charm of romance.

For a long time, however, the gratification of any such desire was impossible. A war that, to judge from the implacability with which it was maintained on both sides, seemed to be interminable, threatened us with eternal exclusion from the continent: so that when, soon after the cessation of hostilities, I found myself pacing the principal street of Calais, I could not immediately bring my mind to credit the reality of my situation. Nor was I, indeed, for several days, altogether freed from the spell thrown over me by the spirit of the place. Was I actually standing in front of *Monsieur Dessin's* door? *Monsieur Dessin*, then, had really lived, and was not a mere creation of the fancy! Was it on this spot Yorick beheld his monk conversing with the lady? Was this the scene of his adventure with her? Did the little *debonaire* captain come dancing down this very street? It was the same thing during the journey onwards. "Nothing was but what was not." At Montreuil I was haunted by Lafleur; at Nampont I almost expected, as a matter of course, to find a dead ass by the road side; at Amiens, I felt some disappointment at not being overtaken by Madame de L * * * in her brother's post-chaise; at Paris—! But here my fancies and delusions were soon extinguished; and Sterne and his monk, and Lafleur and Madame de L * * * were all forgotten in the bustle and excitement of a first visit to what was, and ever will be (in the estimation at least of every Frenchman) *la plus belle ville de l'univers!*

After residing for some time in this *plus belle ville de l'univers*, it happened that I received an invitation to the *Rue St. Pierre*.—The *Rue St. Pierre!*—Why, surely, that was the street inhabited by Sterne's Madame R***! The touch of genius can transform the vilest spot on earth into fairy ground. We behold with feelings of deeper reverence the mud-hovel that has been transferred to the canvass of Morland, or described by the pen of Scott, than the marble mansion of some undistinguished Crœsus. Now, Sterne has always been one of my most favourite authors—not particularly for his *sentiment*, which in him not only is of a questionable character, but is too much paraded: I admire him for his wit, his pathos, his philosophy, and his acute and accurate perception, and masterly sketching, of character.

No wonder, then, that the *Rue St. Pierre*, which is the narrowest, dirtiest, meanest street in Paris, should to me have become the most interesting corner in that interesting city. It appears to have undergone neither change nor improvement for at least a century; and though it has lost its *fashion*—a mutation to which streets, as well as caps and ribbons, are liable—it contains two or three fine houses respectably inhabited. One of these was occupied, shortly before the Revolution, by the most celebrated beauty in France, Mdlle. *Du Thé*,* and

* Already noticed at page 85 of this volume.

might formerly have been the hotel of Sterne's Madame R * * *. Why not? Exquisitely as he has embellished his trifles, I am thoroughly persuaded that Madame R * * * (though *who* she was it seems hopeless now to inquire) was a real personage; that every initial in the "Journey" refers to a real character whom Sterne had met; and that every incident he relates is founded on fact. Madame R * * *'s *port-cochére* stood so palpably before me, that had the *fille de chambre* herself, with *Les Egaremens du Cœur et de l'Esprit* in her pocket, just returned from the *Quai de Conti*, and knocked at the door, I could not have been better satisfied that I was right in my conjecture.

Yet this was but a conjecture after all. But *his own habitation!* the scene of his delightful "*Dimanche*," the "Starling," the "Case of Conscience!" There can be no doubt about *that*. He described it as the *Hotel de Modene*. But then he gives no direct clue to it. Besides, in Paris, there are as many hotels bearing the same name as we have "King's Arms Taverns" and "Blue Posts" in London. Then, again, after the lapse of more than sixty years,* what changes may not have occurred to distract my search? I had already been at fault about the *Opéra Comique*, and settled, to my own satisfaction, the identity of the "long dark passage," the scene of the "Riddle," when I discovered that my *Opéra*

* Written in 1824.

Calais dress coat, which had been many years destroyed. This mishap rendered me cautious: I began to entertain doubts about *Monsieur Dessin's* taste, and grew angry at the bare possibility of having wasted my ecstasies on an impostor. So happening at that time to have nothing better to do, I resolved to settle the point at once: and with a celerity of execution which would have done honour to Yorick himself, "I put up half a dozen shirts"—("black silk breeches" do not form part of a travelling equipage in these days),—got into the Calais diligence, and the next day, "by three, had got sat down to my dinner so incontestably at Calais"——But I must quote no further; for, as the *Droits d'Aubaine* no longer exist, an Englishman, in France, is now permitted to die comfortably of an indigestion, undisturbed by the dread of losing his portmanteau.

CALAIS.

The town of Calais has undergone considerable changes in its general aspect since the period when it was first visited by Sterne (1762). These are all greatly to the benefit of its inhabitants and the convenience of travellers; but to the antiquary and the literary pilgrim, the Spirit of Improvement is a dealer of death-blows. Was it of the smallest importance to me that Calais Harbour had been rendered more commodious than formerly (it is true

I had no immediate intention of embarking from it), when I found that so trifling a matter had cost the destruction of Hogarth's gates! There are still two gates; but one has been so provokingly repaired, and the other so unkindly beautified, that it is impossible to discover a trace of the original. I remember, some years ago, a shattered sentry-box standing, or rather falling, at the side of the furthermost one (Hogarth's) which I always looked at with respect—it must have been the very one sketched by the artist. Lately, when I expressed my sorrow for its removal, and inquired why such an outrage had been committed, I could get no better reason than that the shattered sentry-box was utterly useless as a shelter to the sentinel on duty, and was, moreover, a grievous eye-sore! Ridiculous! Even *Dessin's*, the classic spot —— But let me not touch this melancholy subject abruptly.

Having finished my dinner I sent for mine host.

"*Monsieur Dessin*," said I, "I have journeyed all the way from Paris to Calais for the express purpose of making some inquiries concerning Sterne. You have heard of him perhaps?"

"Heard of him!" ejaculated he, at the same time pulling off his fur cap; then adding, with a low bow and a look of extraordinary complacency, "Sir, I have the honour to be grandson of the grandson whom your illustrious countryman, *Monsieur* Sterne

[illegible] rendered so famous by his *admirable Voyage Sentimentale!*"

"Well, Monsieur *Dessin*, I trust to your complaisance for the information I require."

"Sir, you could not have *fallen* better."

I asked him whether the hotel had always been in possession of his family since the time of *Monsieur Sterne d'Yorick.*

"I grieve to say it has not! The *great Dessin* bequeathed it to his son, who, after conducting it for some time, parted with it to a *M. Quillacq. Mais ce n'étoit plus la même chose—ça n'étoit plus un Dessin!* I conceived the honour of the family to be *intimately* tied to the house—determined to reconnect it with the name of *Dessin* at the first favourable opportunity—*et me voilà!*"

The *Hotel Dessin* retains but few vestiges of its ancient appearance. Here, too, the accursed Spirit of Improvement has been at work: it is now merely one of the most comfortable inns in Europe. But where is the celebrated *Remise door?* It has long disappeared, and the site of the *Remise* itself is now occupied by baths.* *Dessin*, according to his grandson's account of him, was an uneducated man, but possessing considerable natural intelligence. He was *habile* in his business, enterprising and perse-

* Reader: should you happen to visit Calais with Sterne's Journey in your hand, I warn you that the present *Remise*, at the side of the house, is not THE *Remise!* It is a newly acquired property.

vering: no wonder, therefore, that his hotel, which at its establishment was small and inconvenient, grew, under his fostering care, to nearly four times its original size. I trembled whilst I listened to the accounts of the family prosperity, for at each stage of aggrandizement some trace or relic of my favourite was threatened with destruction. *Monsieur Dessin* perceived this.

"*Ne craignez rien, Monsieur,*" said he. "No material changes have taken place *since* Monsieur Sterne's visit (the hard-hearted Frenchman thought nothing of the *Remise door !*); I will even show you the very room he occupied ! ! !"

The very room ! This was indeed worth the trouble of the journey and a compensation for all other disappointments. The very chamber in which he sat ruminating on the inherent kindness of human nature—where the poor monk came to beg a trifle of him for his convent—which trifle he denied him. The very chamber! But as the "very chamber" happened at that time to be occupied by a French cavalry officer, who was just dressing, I spent the time till his departure in establishing the exact position of the *Désobligeant*, in the "furthest corner of the court-yard," and in visiting the poor monk's convent. The old Désobligeant *must* have stood in the left-hand corner of the yard on entering from the street. I say it *must*, because I have found Sterne to be as minutely correct in his topography, as he is

[illegible] in his delineation of character: consequently, the Franciscan, whom Sterne "did not care to face," must have held his conference with the lady in the corner nearest the garden. As to the convent (*Les Capucins*), *that* shared the fate of other religious houses during the Revolution, and was destroyed: the only part of it which now remains is the chapel, and it is used by *Dessin* as a repository for carriages. I entered it alone; and there was something peculiarly impressive—awful I had almost said—in the contemplation of the extreme unfitness of the place for the purpose! I bowed before the spot where once the altar stood, and fancied that the poor monk's gentle spirit might be gratified at this act of respect to the place which his presence had hallowed.

But now to the "very room."—*Monsieur Dessin* very politely led the way into the garden.—"The room, Sir," said he, "is No. 31, and *Monsieur Sterne d' Yorick* being a studious man, my grandfather selected that particular apartment for him on account of its quiet: *on n'y entend que les oiseaux.*" On the outside of the door is painted, in large characters,

STERNE'S CHAMBER.

The cavalry officer having just quitted it, *après d'avoir fait sa toilette*, its appearance was not calculated to excite, in a very great degree, one's romantic emotions: but a portrait of Sterne—a fine impression of the large mezzotinto after Sir Joshua—which occupied a pro-

minent place, conjured up images that instantly overpowered the faculty of vision as applied to the unpoetical objects before me. I saw Yorick at dinner upon a fricasseed chicken and a bottle of burgundy; I saw him kick aside his portmanteau; I saw Father Lorenzo enter that very door; I saw—Heaven knows how much more I might have seen had not an unlucky qualm come over me. I must needs doubt; I must needs be inquisitive, and be hanged to me!

"And, pray, *Monsieur Dessin*, is this apartment in *nearly* the same state as when Sterne was its tenant?"

"*C'est absolument la même chose, Monsieur.*"

"And, pray, *Monsieur Dessin*, what evidence have you to prove even that this was the apartment?"

"The evidence is traditional: the waiter who attended *Monsieur Sterne d'Yorick* died no longer than two or three years ago."

"He must have been very old," said I, doubtingly.

"*C'est égal, Monsieur.*"

But *Monsieur Dessin*, perceiving that it was altogether *égal* to me, said he could produce some proof of the authenticity of Sterne's chamber, sufficient to set all my doubts at rest:—the date of the erection of the building was sculptured immediately beneath the window. The whole of the edifice being overgrown by a prodigious vine, a man was ascending a ladder to cut away that part of it which concealed

the important stone. "*Ah! ah! nous voilà!*" exclaimed *Monsieur Dessin* triumphantly. I looked, when lo! there appeared, in astounding numerals, the date 1770!

This was a most unlucky discovery. Mine host, who expected nothing else than the unconditional surrender to him of all my doubts, soon perceived that (to use a play-house phrase) there was a hitch in the scenery.

"*Eh! bien, Monsieur?*"

"*Eh! bien, Monsieur Dessin:* this particular part of your hotel was not ushered into its brick-and-mortar existence until 1770; and *Monsieur Sterne d'Yorick*, as you please to call him, was quietly lying in his grave in 1768!"

"*Sacristi! c'est bien mal-à-propos!* But, Sir, do not imagine that I intended to deceive you, I am incapable of such an act—I repeat nothing more than I have heard from others—that rascally waiter upon whose veracity I depended!"

I assured *Monsieur Dessin* that I imputed no blame to him.

"*Monsieur, ne me croyez pas charlatan; je ne le suis pas, je vous le jure.* You have decided that Sterne could not have occupied this room; and to convince you that I have no interest in countenancing the error which has so long existed, do you give yourself the trouble to examine the house, and *any other*

room you may please to select shall, for the future, be STERNE'S CHAMBER."

I deferred the exercise of the privilege till some future opportunity; and the selection, (by me, at least,) is still unmade.

Calais is frequently described as a dull, uninteresting town; and, as a mere congregation of houses, so it it is; and to the *dull* traveller, impatient for the fine sights and the good cheer of Paris, and to the wind-bound dolt who, having exhausted himself in the enjoyment of them, looks impatiently towards home, so must it ever be. But the town of Calais is connected with names and events which ought to render it (and to an Englishman particularly) eminently interesting. The glory of the English arms under Edward, so well maintained, and so nearly sullied by an act of cruelty, before its walls;—the courageous interposition of his Queen Phillippa;—the gallantry of Ribaumont;—the *real patriotism* (a quality much misunderstood by many of the present day who talk about it) of Eustache St. Pierre;* surely these alone, to say nothing of our English classic, are sufficient to insure it the respect of an intelligent visitor. For my own part, I have a particular affection for the place; and wishing that it should stand well with my readers, I will offer them

* His bust over the town-hall, and the application of his name to one of the principal streets, attest the respect in which his memory is held by the Calaisians.

as a bribe for their suffrages, the beautiful speech of its most celebrated citizen, *Eustache St. Pierre*, when he proposed himself as the first victim to the vengeance of Edward. I give it in the exact words of Froissart: its noble and affecting simplicity would be injured by any attempt either to modernize or to translate it.

"Seigneurs, grand' pitié et grand mischef seroit de laisser mourir un tel peuple que ici a, par famine ou autrement, quand on y peut trouver aucun moyen, et ce seroit grand' aumône et grand' grace envers nostre Seigneur, qui de tel mischef le pourroit garder, je en droit moy ay si grand' esperance d'avoir grâce et pardon envers notre Seigneur si je muir pour ce peuple sauver, que je vueil estre le premier et me mettray volontiers en pur ma chemise, à nud chef, et la hart (corde) au col, en la merci du Roy d'Angleterre."

But the Paris diligence is ready to start, and I have booked a place to Montreuil. *Allons.*

The most careless observer who has enjoyed opportunities of mingling in French society cannot fail to have been struck with the wonderful fidelity of Sterne's sketches of French character. You meet the counterparts of his portraits at every turn. Here was one at starting. My opposite companion in the vehicle was a tall fat Frenchman, whom I afterwards found to be a Colonel of the *Garde Royale.* We were proceeding to-

wards the *Porte de Paris*, and had hardly reached the extremity of that very street down which Sterne's inquisitive little captain came dancing, ere the following questions, all which I answered in the negative, had been inflicted upon me: "Undoubtedly, Monsieur is just arrived from England?—You are not a Frenchman?—Then, being at Calais, you are from the Low Countries?—Then you are an inhabitant of Calais?—Shall we have the pleasure of your company all the way to Paris?—Then what could possibly bring you to such a place as Calais? Ah! I see: Monsieur is attached to the embassy?—*Militaire*, perhaps?—A merchant?—*C'est singulier!*"

MONTREUIL.

I need not scarcely remind my readers that it was here Sterne hired *Lafleur*. Every inn in the place asserts a claim to the honour of having been the scene of that event. The *Hotel de l'Europe*, being the most considerable *auberge* in the town, is the most frequented. Here we stopped. Full of the object of my journey, I instantly commenced my inquiries. Not only was I assured that this was the house, but they could show me "the very room." I had seen "the very room" at Calais, and this promise was ominous of disappointment. There was the portrait; but, for the rest, the imposition was too glaring.

"This is evidently a modern room," said I.

"*Demande pardon, Monsieur*," replied my guide, (this is invariably a Frenchman's prelude to a flat contradiction)—"*Demande pardon:* there can be no doubt as to the authenticity of this room, for the house has been built nearly *thirty* years, and it has been used as an *auberge* for more than half that time!"

"*Bien bon soir!*"

So I took up my portmanteau and quitted the *Hotel de l'Europe*, thoroughly satisfied that the honour it claimed could not be conceded to it.

I will not drag my reader about with me to all the little inns in Montreuil, but take him at once to the *Hotel de la Cour de France*, which I pronounce to be that where Yorick and Lafleur became first acquainted. Every point of evidence is in its favour. "His countenance is a letter of recommendation." It stands at the further extremity of the town, near to the green where the little holiday-makings of the place have been held time immemorial; where perhaps the light-hearted *Lafleur* was dancing with the "half-dozen wenches" at the moment of Yorick's arrival. A time-worn effigy of *la Sainte Vierge* appears in a niche over one of its windows. Modern luxury has done so much to improve the appearance, as well as the accommodation, of all houses of public entertainment, that the first aspect of this inn—considered merely in its vulgar capacity of *inn*—is by no means inviting, though it must have been a house of very considerable pretensions half a century ago.

But to me it appeared to possess more elevated claims to respect than the most magnificent hotel in all France; and the result of my inquiries confirmed the opinion I had preconceived in its favour.

Here, too, they show you "the very room," which, however, it may be as well to look upon as apocryphal, notwithstanding the eternal portrait is subpœnaed in attestation of the fact; nor is it altogether safe to rely on the grave assertion of the waiter that Sterne honoured them with his express permission to insert in their cards of address "Sterne's favourite house." But we have "proof more relative than this." The *auberge* is the oldest in the town: it was the only one of any importance existing at the period of Yorick's journey; and has been kept *de pere en fils* (that is to say, in the same family) by *Varennes* from that time to this. It may happen that some of my readers, should they travel the same road, might think it worth their while to visit the undoubted scene of the "*Tant pis pour Mademoiselle Jamais*" (the landlord's, old *Varennes'*, daughter), and this first introduction of *Lafleur;* so, to guard them against mistake, I take leave to present them with the card of

VARENNES,
HOTEL DE LA COUR DE FRANCE,
A côté de la Poste aux Chevaux,
MONTREUIL,
STERNE'S FAVOURITE HOUSE.

Interest at this door the scene with the beggars de-
serveth a Tithe interesting class of human beings is
still as numerous, and quite as importunate, as in
1762; but its joint-stock of *politesse* is considerably
reduced. A traveller, therefore, who, in these days
of refinement and general civilization, should under-
take a sentimental journey through France, may
reckon on the pleasure of being as much annoyed
by those gentry as Sterne was; but the compact
between beggary and urbanity, that so much asto-
nished him, has long been sent to the moon. To
speak the plain truth, French street-beggars are, to
the full, as intolerable as their fellow-nuisances in
England.

The journey from Nampont to Amiens affords occa-
sion for a description of French travelling, so fresh, so
true, so strictly accurate in all its points, that it might
have been written yesterday. *Lafleur's* jack-boots—
the frequent derangement of the tackle—the perver-
sity of the postillion—the hallooing and screaming—
the jumbling upon the *pavé*—the "clattering like a
thousand devils"—all these circumstances are still
applicable. Our neighbours have condescended to
receive a few useful hints from us on the construc-
tion of carriages, certainly; but with respect to
their horses, harness, drivers, and other appurte-
nances, they owe us nought—*tout ça est comme avant
la Révolution.*

The exact scene of the Dead Ass, though some-

where in the neighbourhood of *Nampont*, is not indicated; but the dispute with the postillion may be traced step by step: "the steep hill about half a league from Nampont" is, to this day, where it was. This piece of information is by no means so absurd as, at first sight, it may appear. Had *Nampont* been in England, or had Mr. MacAdam been a road-mender in France, it is probable that not a vestige of the "steep hill" would have remained to confirm the truth of Sterne's narration!

Amiens was the scene of Lafleur's visit to Madame de L * * *'s hotel: here, too, the celebrated "letter" was written. But beyond this we are at fault. I have already expressed my belief that every adventure related in the "Journey" (highly embellished as it may be) is founded on fact, and that every initial alludes to a real personage. In some instances the initials may be applied with certainty; and in every case where I have been able to trace Sterne to *a particular spot*, I have found the description of it to be minutely exact. This, I think, would not have been the case, had his adventures been purely imaginary. Amiens in his time was, as it still is, a considerable town, containing *many* large *auberges*; and as we have no clue to guide us to that which our tourist occupied, nor can now the lover who *Madame de L* * * * really was, nor where she inhabited, our stay here is fruitless. So at Sterne makes a leap in his journey from Amiens

to Paris, leaving the intermediate road a blank, we follow his example.

PARIS. *The Hotel de Modene.*

"So taking down the name of the Hotel de Modene where I lodged—" says Sterne.

It would be worth while to discover this, the scene of "The Case of Conscience," "The Starling," "The Dimanche," &c.; but, considering the extraordinary changes the city has undergone within even these few months, it is more than probable, that the sixty years which have passed away since the period of Sterne's visit, have carried his Hotel de Modene along with them. The transformation of Swallow-street into Regent-street, by the magic touch of Harlequin NASH, will serve to convey some idea of the hocus-pocus daily operating upon every quarter of Paris. *Hic, hoc, presto!* and a dirty narrow lane becomes a noble street, a timber-shed is transformed into a stone mansion, and for a blind alley we have an elegant arcade! Yesterday *there* flourished a garden, its lofty trees struggling with the surrounding chimneys for pre-eminence: to-day a theatre occupies the spot!—'Twas *there* you last night witnessed the graceful dalliance of *Flore et Zephyr* in an almost real Arcadia: this morning the Temple of Enchantment has disappeared, and a fountain bubbles in the void! But this is not all:

the very *ends of the town* (applying to them the English distinction of fashionable and unfashionable) have been for nearly a century, and still are, playing at cross-purposes. The *Marais*, once the French "West End,"* and where you still read the remarkable names of De Sevigné, Turenne, De Joyeuse, over the gates of their respective hotels, is now the French Hackney, or Islington—the retreat of warm traders and prudent shop-keepers who have quitted business. From the *Marais* Fashion took its flight across the bridges to the Fauxbourg St. Germain, and the abandoned *Marais* of course became in the most emphatic sense of that most emphatic word—a *bore*. But Fashion is a whimsical, capricious, restless jade, and presently we find her perched in the *Quartier St. Honoré*. Who now could breathe in the *Fauxbourg St. Germain?* For a *fashionable* to have remained there, would have been much the same as *the* Duchess of Devonshire taking up her residence in Tooley-street in the Borough. Then again over the bridges—then to the *Chaussée d'Antin* —over the bridges again:—and now, such is the rage and the impatience for an apartment in the dear, dear, doubly dear, that beautiful, that delightful, that

* A Frenchman, to whom I was describing some of the improvements of London, which he had not visited since the Peace of Amiens, said, in reply to my observation, that the fashion was pushing towards the *north*: "Ah! Sare; it is of no use: *that* never shall be the West-end of your town till your king make his palace there."

only possible habitable point on the face of the globe, the *Chaussée d'Antin*, that I have seen a family lodged in the first floor of an unfinished house whilst the second was building over their heads! How then, amidst all these changes, can I hope to identify Sterne's Hotel de Modene? But *nil desperandum*,—which, freely translated, means *I'll try*.

The first result of my inquiry for the Hotel de Modene was somewhat perplexing: it was nothing less than the discovery that there were ten or a dozen, in different parts of the city. This was a most distressing abundance, and I heartily wished eleven of them—no matter where. It is a fact honourable to the heart and the understanding of man that intemperate or unreasonable wishes are seldom long persisted in: one reason for this may be, that such wishes are mostly unavailable. The massive stone tenements of Paris, unlike "*These houses to let*" that grow up so plentifully in and about London, are not to be blown down by a breath, nor shaken to their foundations even by a country-dance: whatever else may be objected to French houses, they are, at least, quadrille-proof. There was nothing potent, then, in my mere *wish* to rid me of eleven unwelcome Hotels de Modene: no sooner, therefore, was it uttered than retracted; and I resolved to try some other method of clearing my list of its superfluities, which, however less speedy might be its operation, should offer the advantage of being

practicable. This sensible resolution was not long without its reward: for it at once occurred to me that from certain indications, given by Sterne himself, his lodging *must have been* in the *Faubourg St. Germain*. Thus was I enabled to relieve myself of the incumbrance of one-half the town by a dash of the pen. This was much, but it was far from being all: for there were still, as I was told, three Hôtels de Modene in that very quarter. On a careful examination of these, I was satisfied that none of them was the house I sought; one having but lately assumed the name, another being an establishment of recent date, and the third an unfinished building. Pursuing my inquiries, I found there was a fourth, but could not learn exactly where.

"We stood still at the corner of the Rue de *Nevers* whilst this passed," says Sterne (alluding to his conversation with Madame R***'s *femme de chambre*, on the Quai de Conti). "But is this the way, my dear, said I, to the Hotel de Modene? She told me it was—or that I might go by the Rue *Guenegaud*, which was the next turn."

I traversed those streets and their immediate neighbourhood, but without success. I was reduced to my last hope—the direction given by the *grisette*. I own I did not anticipate a favourable result from my concluding attempt; and I made it rather with a view to ascertain that further search would be fruitless, than in the expectation of finding

the object of my search. Failing to discover a [illegible] passage, the next best thing would be to prove to demonstration that there is none.

"Pray, madam, said I, have the goodness to tell me which way I must turn to go to the Opéra Comique.—You must turn, Monsieur, said she, going with me to the door of the shop, and pointing the way down the street I was to take—you must turn first to your left hand—*mais prenez garde*—there are two turns; and be so good as to take the second; then go down a little way and you 'll see a church, and when you are past it, give yourself the trouble to turn directly to the right, and that will lead you to the foot of the *Pont Neuf*," &c.—*The Pulse, Sent. Jour.*

It was impossible to determine Yorick's starting-point; so placing myself at the foot of the *Pont Neuf*, with the *grisette* for my guide, I followed the exact inverse of her minute directions, and presently found myself in the *Rue Jacob;* down which, at a few paces to the right, I perceived, to my extreme satisfaction, a sign-board exhibiting the welcome words—HOTEL DE MODENE!

The *Rue Jacob* is as little indebted to modern improvement as our Wych Street: such as it was a century ago, nearly such is it now. Napoleon said of the emigrants, *Après vingt-cinq ans ils n'ont rien appris; ils n'ont rien oubliés;* so may it be asserted of the *Rue Jacob*, it has gained nothing—it has lost

nothing. The situation, the age and appearance of the house, and, above all, the way in which I was led to it, might have satisfied me that it was the identical object of my search: the authenticity of many a celebrated spot has been acknowledged upon evidence less conclusive. But I look at all antiquities, all curiosities, with an eye of suspicion; and whenever anything bearing either of those titles is presented to me, the first operation of my mind is *to doubt*. I am not altogether unwarranted in the indulgence of this unamiable propensity, for I have already seen *nine of the three* Queen Anne's farthings; nearly as much of Shakspeare's mulberry-tree as would suffice to build a seventy-four; three undoubted originals of Titian's mistress; two hearts of Charles XII.; and three of Oliver Cromwell's skulls! to say nothing of dozens of *uniques* of the relics of the same saint. But it was the recollection of "Sterne's Chamber" at Calais (an imposture, or, to speak gently of it, a *mistake*, more to the point) which, happening to come across me at the moment, warned me to be cautious; else it is not unlikely I might have remained satisfied with *this* Hotel de Modene: so strong were appearances in its favour.

It certainly is by no means pleasant to see one's latest theory or discovery overturned at each successive stage of inquiry; still, in matters of this nature, there is never any harm in doubting. And though I am aware that we often tempt the danger

tion of the most agreeable illusions to be derived from the supposed connexion of a certain spot with some remarkable person or event when we try it by the severe test of truth; yet, for my own part, I should seldom feel inclined to allow it the honours of the association upon mere conjectural evidence. The Chevalier Crédule of Paris, Professor Von Gulp of Berlin, and Professor Von Gudgeon of Leyden, are at issue respecting the precise six square feet of ground where Leonidas fell. The Chevalier plants his wand, and dogmatically asserts "'Twas here;" Von Gulp is prepared to prove, beyond the possibility of contradiction, that it was exactly one rood and an inch further in a right line to the S.S.E.; whilst Von Gudgeon is ready to demonstrate, to the confusion of both, and the edification of the whole world, that it was distant from the Chevalier's point one rood *less* an inch, in a right line bearing N.W. by W. Could the "precise six square feet of ground" be ascertained, the fact would be interesting; but, since they cannot, for Heaven's sake rid me of these quacks, who, by their endeavours to impose upon my belief a doubtful *particular*, diminish the integrity of my general associations, and, by so doing, disturb me in the enjoyment of them.

At the hazard, then, of upsetting all the probabilities, I resolved to make an inquiry or two of Madame Guilliarme, the mistress of the hotel.

Alas! she had never heard of Sterne, and knew no more of *Le Voyage Sentimental* than of the Koran: she was sorry and *altogether desolated* that it was so —could she have furnished me with any information it would have *made* the greatest possible pleasure for her, and she would have been *charmed*. But Mademoiselle, who was making a *coloratta* in an inner room, hearing something about *Sentimental*, fancied herself privileged to come forth and join in the conversation: for, ever since the days of the Corsair, the Giaour, and *Le Solitaire*,* it has been considered by young French ladies—and by some tolerably old ones too—as *tout-à-fait gentil* to be rather *sentimental*; and it requires but a few more Corsairs to set them all as sentimental, in the nonsensical sense of the word, as Germans. I explained the object of my visit to Mademoiselle; and, having a French translation of the Journey in my pocket, pointed out to her the passage in which the Hotel de Modene was mentioned. Her expression of astonishment and delight was inconceivably ludicrous. "*O Dieu! is it possible!* Our humble inn spoken of *in a book!* in a romance, too! But, sir, I *supplicate* you to tell me, is it really a *roman*, or is it nothing but a book of travels?" Mademoiselle being satisfied that it was not a *mere* book of travels, became anxious to settle the point in favour of their own hotel, and her answer to all my objections

* A novel by the Vicomte d'Arlincourt: the rage at that time; devoted to immortality; consequently, now forgotten.

"*C'est cela, Monsieur; soyez persuadé que c'est notre maison.*" A long cross-examination ensued; of which (having loitered much longer about the Hotel de Modene than I intended) I shall give the result as briefly as possible.

The present Hotel de Modene, then (No. 12, Rue Jacob), is *not* the house where Sterne lodged. The undoubted scene of the "Case of Conscience," the "Starling," &c. is the very next house to it, No. 14.* The latter is now a private house, and its business as an Hotel, together with its name, were transferred to its neighbour about five-and-twenty years ago. Prior to that period, No. 14 was, and had been time out of mind, the Hotel de Modene; and it was not till within these few years that there was even a second bearing a similar denomination on the whole of that side of the river. This information, which I collected from several of the old inhabitants of the quarter, and from the proprietor of the house himself, was confirmed by an inquiry at the *Prefecture de Police*, where a register of all lodging-houses is kept. All this, together with its situation, which tallies so perfectly with Sterne's topographical account of his walk to the Pont Neuf, is surely sufficient to establish the *fact* of this being his Hotel de Modene: and since it is certain the house has un-

* Lest any of the few who have not visited Paris, and are not aware of the circumstance, should consider this a blunder, it is proper to state, that the even numbers are all on one side of a street, and the odd ones on the other.

dergone no material alteration since his time, that as choose to indulge their *fancies* may hang their Starling in the "very passage" along which Yorick passed on his way to the Court-yard; or may even buckle a *femme de chambre's* shoe in Yorick's own room, provided, (since buckles are no longer in fashion,) they will also *fancy* the buckle.*

L'Opéra Comique.

The Opéra Comique holds an important place in the "Journey." Yorick pays a visit to it immediately on his arrival; it occasions the chapters of the "Pulse," the "Husband," and the "Glove," and is the actual scene of the "Dwarf," the "Act of Charity," and, partly, of the "Rose." The descriptions he has given of two different parts of the building are both of them perfectly correct, and each of them, indeed, is remarkably minute.

"There is a long dark passage issuing out from the Opéra Comique into a narrow street; 't is used by a few who humbly wait for a *fiacre*, or walk to get off quietly on foot when the opera is done. This is the scene of the Act of Charity.

"At the end of the orchestra, and betwixt that and the first side-box, there is a small esplanade

* I was desirous of discovering the name of the landlord who played so conspicuous a part in the "Passport" and the "Consciousness;" but all the registers down to within a few years of the Revolution had been destroyed.

[illegible], when the house is full, numbers of all ranks [illegible]. Though you stand, as in the parterre, you pay the same price as in the orchestra." It was in this "lowest place" that the poor dwarf encountered the tall German. But, reader, beware of seeking these classic spots at the *Théâtre Feydeau*, the actual Comic Opera, where there is, indeed, an insidious "long dark passage," answering the description sufficiently to mislead you, as it once misled me. Sterne's *Opéra Comique* was situated in that part of the town where no one in these days could imagine a theatre had ever existed: it is a spot which may be assimilated to our Seven Dials: like it, it stands pre-eminent in degradation, and is the lowest of the low. The *Comédie Italienne* (for such was properly its appellation) stood in the *Rue Mauconseil*, which is near the *Rue de la Vieille Friperie*, where *Lafleur* bought his gay scarlet livery; and not very far from it is the *Halle* (the great fish-market): a place which has derived considerable celebrity from the circumstance of its being occupied by that very interesting class of females, vulgarly denominated *poissardes*, but who, in polite French—in language befitting the elegance and delicacy of its objects—are termed *les dames de la Halle*. Of the theatre, which was destroyed not many years after the period of Sterne's visit, nothing now remains but part of its walls:* in one of these is an old

* The *Théâtre Feydeau*, also (its successor,) has within these few years been demolished.

grated door, opening to a long narrow passage, which, from its situation (it having been an outlet to the by-street), is probably the passage [illegible] site is now occupied by the *Halle aux Cuirs* (the leather-market), erected in 1784. In the King's Library, at Paris, a plan of the old theatre is preserved. It serves as a confirmation of Sterne's exactness and fidelity in the description even of trifling objects, and, consequently, as some proof of what has already been asserted, that every incident he relates, however highly he may have embellished it, is founded on fact. The plan of the [illegible] the esplanade, &c., correspond precisely with the description of them; and there you have the "luckless place" palpably before you. So much for the theatre itself. With respect to the performances in Yorick's time they were principally French and Italian farces, which, with the exception of some of Goldoni's, were of no very elevated character. The most celebrated composers of that day were Philidor and Duni, of whose music not a bar is now heard, notwithstanding the immortality which the critics of the time predicted for it;* and the [illegible] who, most likely, contributed to Sterne's amusement were *Cailleau*, *Clairval*, and *Mlle. Ruelle*. [illegible]

* Grétry had not yet appeared; but it was at this [illegible] duced his earliest and some of his best works. It is [illegible] not generally known, that *L'Amant Jaloux*, *Les* [illegible] vus (two of the best operas on the French stage), [illegible] music of all which was composed by Grétry, were [illegible] Irishman, named Hales—gallicised, *D'Hèle*.

[illegible] collection of many, and was one of the [illegible] to the Comic Opera ever produced. [illegible] the many changes which habits and manners have undergone, it may be relevant to the subject to notice, that the performances at the theatres usually commenced between three and four o'clock, and concluded about eight. It was *after* the performance that Sterne called at the bookseller's, on the Quai de Conti, on his "return home," and that the adventure with the *femme de chambre* occurred; a circumstance which seems to require the explanation given.

Of the other places in Paris rendered celebrated by being mentioned in the "Journey," a short notice will suffice. The *Rue St. Pierre*, where dwelt Mad. R[illegible] (only known to us as the mistress of a more important personage, her *femme de chambre*), has already been described. The *Bastile*, it is needless to say, no longer stands to terrify the careless traveller, who may have penetrated into the great city unprotected by a passport. The *Châtelêt*, too, has disappeared, and nothing remains to attest its former existence except its name, which it has bequeathed to the square now occupying its site. The last place we shall notice is the "lane leading from the Carousel to the Palais Royal," where Yorick helped the dwarf over the gutter. This was the *Rue St. Nicaise*, the only opening then existing in that direction. It was in this very street an attempt was made, which, had it

succeeded, would have prevented the burning of Moscow, deprived the English of an opportunity of gathering laurels in Spain, rendered them incapable of making Napoleon their prisoner, and, consequently, have secured that wonderful man against the possibility of terminating his life, at the lonely isle of Helena. That attempt was nothing less than to destroy Buonaparte by means of the Infernal Machine. This hellish contrivance was placed athwart the celebrated gutter so as to obstruct his carriage in its way to the Opera. The coachman flogged his horses, and dashed forward—the machine exploded, killing and wounding several persons! Had the explosion taken place but one half of a minute sooner, it would, in addition to the consequences above enumerated, have blown Buonaparte—it is difficult to say where, and reduced Mr. Rennie to the necessity of finding some other appellation for his noble bridge than the one by which it is now distinguished. Buonaparte, however, escaped unhurt; but, shortly after the event, the guilty *Rue St. Nicaise* was condemned to demolition; and, accordingly, the whole of it, together with its interesting gutter, was swept from the face of Paris.

VERSAILLES.

From Paris, Yorick makes an excursion to Versailles, where the Court was then held; where the ministers and great public functionaries resided, and all state business was transacted. He is not

adventures here: the "Passport," the "Address," "Charleton," the "*Patissier*," are among the most interesting chapters of his book. The only places particularly alluded to, are, the spot where the poor Knight of St. Louis "usually took his stand"—near the iron gates which led up to the palace; and the *Petits Choiseul's* apartments, during the approach to which Sterne debates in his own mind the mode of "Address." There stands the melancholy palace as if in mockery of human vanity! Its splendid halls, its far-stretching galleries, and countless chambers, are void and desolate: the sounds of gaiety have ceased to vibrate in its theatre, the voice of prayer no more is heard within its gilded chapel. Yet there it stands, the tomb of kingly grandeur—a marble moral, an epigram, a bitter mockery! You pace its lengthened floors, and its tenantless walls return the echo of your footsteps sickeningly upon the heart. Looking at what Versailles is, it is scarcely possible to believe what it has been. The iron gates, near which the *Patissier* usually took his stand, enclose the court yard—not filled with carriages, pressing towards a minister's levee, as when Yorick "wheeled round it"—but still, silent, motionless, lifeless! The town, too, is sad and gloomy. With its broad unfrequented streets, verdant with tufts of grass which leisurely spring up between its untrodden stones,

and with its huge, but thinly tenanted domain, it appears as if hungering for a population.*

This paper has been devoted almost entirely to the tracing out of the several spots visited by Sterne in the course of his Journey: to the record of the destruction of some, and of the transformation of others amongst them; and to the proving of the identity of such as still exist. A more interesting task remains —that of applying a similar process in illustration of the wonderful truth and fidelity of his sketches of French character and manners. That task may probably be undertaken at some future period.

* The reader is requested to observe, that this description of Versailles was strictly true when it was written (1835): for that it was no longer, not the writer, but Louis-Philippe, is responsible.

POMPONIUS EGO.

A CHARACTER.

"He will abuse himself into the possession of every good quality under the sun."—*Spectator.*

Friend. My dear Ego, I 'm glad to see you; sit down.

Ego. No, thank you; not now. I certainly did come to enjoy an hour's gossip with you, but that huge brief before you is a hint to me to be gone. I saw by the paper that that cause comes on to-morrow, and understand you are engaged for the defence. I am aware of my infirmity,—for that is the best name I can give to the propensity I allude to,—so I never take a seat when I call on a friend who happens to be occupied at the time, for, if I do, there I remain. It is a habit I cannot conquer, so I 'll *stand* for fear of consequences. While one is standing, one is going, as they say. I told Tom Osborne the same

thing of myself when I called at his chambers yesterday.—"I know I'm a bore," says I, "when once I sit down; once seated, I talk, talk, talk." But Tom, who certainly is a clever fellow, and does converse better than most men I am acquainted with, insisted that when I *do* talk, I talk well and to the purpose. It was civil on his part, but he couldn't have meant it. I chatter, to be sure, and may pass in a crowd; but as to anything like eminence in conversation—! By-the-by, I may as well take a chair while I *do* stay.—As I was saying, he couldn't have meant it—certainly not in a large sense. I am willing to admit that there are subjects I am as well acquainted with as are the ordinary run of talkers, broach *them*, and, without vanity, I may say I am afraid of no one. But what of that? Where is the merit of talking passably—nay, even of talking in a way which now and then produces an effect that—however, that is not for me to say. I know myself, at least, I think I do; and if I excel in anything, most assuredly is not in conversation. There are well acquainted with me, indeed, insist on the contrary; but what does that prove? Friends are partial. No, no; believe me, I am a very [illegible] fellow.

F. Pray, did Osborne say anything to you about a horse he has advised me to buy?

E. No—not to me—ha, ha, ha! I didn't think he *would* to *me*. Well as he understands [illegible]

[illegible] (which few men know more about it), I am [illegible] to say I am his master there. I [illegible] too much attention to horses—at least I think so—for I have acquired a knowledge of that subject which few jockeys or dealers have attained. However, on that point, I think it scarcely a gentlemanlike attainment—I mean to the extent to which I have carried it. I'll give you *my* opinion of that horse, but remember you don't quote me afterwards—I'd rather not be thought critical about horses.

Ay! Why, where's the harm of it? The greatest men in the country—

Yes, that's true enough. But don't you think the case of a private gentleman is somewhat different?—though I am willing to allow that men of the highest rank do not disdain to——Well, be it how it may, I *am* rather knowing upon that point; at any rate it is generally thought so. Lord Scamper, who is the very best judge in all England, said, the other day—and he said it in the presence of some of the members at Melton, and members of the Jockey Club—that my judgment was superior to that of any man he knew. I don't think he meant it, though—indeed, I should hope he did not; for I have no ambition to rank supreme in the circle of ——. But tell me candidly, now, for you *know* Scamper—no man knows him better—is he a sincere man? *I* think he *is*; and I verily believe he would not utter an opinion he did not entertain.

Whether or not, if there be any one [illegible] more *au fait* at than another, it is [illegible] horses—contemptuously as you may think of [illegible] the confession.

F. To say the truth, I think [illegible] laughing at you. You know his Lordship [illegible] a jest. You remember his extravagant [illegible] your dancing?

E. You think, then, he was quizzing [illegible] Quiz my dancing! Come, I like that: [illegible] have no pretensions that way. And [illegible], where is the merit of dancing well? I should be ashamed of myself if I were remarkable for so [illegible] an accomplishment. Nothing annoys me [illegible] to hear it said that I dance well. I do believe [illegible] on that very account Miss Gossamer [illegible] praising me. You know her? She's a [illegible] creature. She has good sense, judgment [illegible] Now, *she is* an excellent dancer [illegible] Noble's—and, unquestionably, understands [illegible] better than any other person I am [illegible] with. An indifferent dancer is her [illegible] never will dance with any one but myself [illegible] to be present. Is n't it annoying?

F. No: for my part I should be delighted [illegible] it in my power to do anything deserving of [illegible]

E. That depends altogether on the [illegible] what you may be praised for. Now, [illegible] fiddle, for instance. Would you like to [illegible]

[illegible] you fiddle well? Would *you*? And you, my dear fellow, it has been my misfortune to be [illegible]—No matter: I have a broad back, and can bear a great deal. I think it was Lord Chesterfield who said fiddling was not an accomplishment for a gentleman.

—Yet I have heard you play?

—Oh! if you call my scraping *play*—! It was Lord Chesterfield, too, who said that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well. When I reflect on the time I have thrown away in the practice of that most difficult of all instruments! Well, I am not naturally vain; so I may say there was a time when I thought myself not the very worst performer in the world. But when I heard Paganini—! Bless my soul! I felt my own littleness. Yet he is not always perfectly in tune; and stopping out of tune is a fault for which no merit can compensate. But then his execution is wonderful—more wonderful than pleasing, perhaps. But expression is [illegible]. Do you think—never mind what the [illegible] public have decided—but, between ourselves, do you think expression was his *forte*? I say nothing; but—Pray, have you a violin in your chambers?

—No; but I have a flute.

—I hate the flute. I never enter a house where there is a flute but they positively nail me down to play: on that account the very sight of a flute is worse than an emetic to me. But I'm glad you

haven't got a violin, for if I had once got [illegible] hands (even hating the thing as I do), I [illegible] have laid it down for an hour. By-the-by, [illegible] make is your flute? I should just like to try it [illegible]

F. I don't know where to look for it [illegible]

E. I'm right glad you don't. [illegible] Nicholson? He never sees me but he makes me play "Rode's Variations," and two or three other favourite pieces of his. He says, that for an [illegible] —in short, that very few professors could [illegible] with——. Haven't you remarked the propensity of certain professors to degrade one to their own level? To pretend that I blow through a stick like a professor of that sublime art! It is cursed impudence, isn't it?

F. Yes; to pretend so: as it was [illegible] when he asked you, the other day, how many lessons in drawing you had given Turner.

E. That was an impudent sneer. The idea of my giving lessons to Turner, an R. A.! Why, Turner could teach *me;* yet I *can* draw, that I know and will say; for drawing is a gentlemanly, [illegible] manly art—like riding, which, perhaps, I do a *leetle too* far. But, then, I was set upon a horse before I could well walk, and have been a constant rider all my life. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that I should ride better if I did not ride so well.

F. I don't clearly understand that.

remarkable; to confess the truth, I know I am. Who do you think I was mistaken for the day before yesterday?

E. I cannot possibly guess.

F. A celebrated person, I assure you. In Piccadilly, my horse threw me into a pond of M'Adam's dust. As I was remounting, a boy called out, "There goes Ducrow!" One hates to be remarkable—at least *I* do. 'Tis the same thing in driving. Any one who has had a tolerable share of practice, can handle the ribbons. There's no merit in it—none in the world. Yet, do the thing in the slightest way differently from other people—I won't say better—you are a marked man. I once upset the Southampton Telegraph; yet, will you believe me? there wasn't a soul hurt, except the coachman and guard, and one outside passenger, who broke his own leg by falling awkwardly. That was no fault of mine. It was the neatest thing in the way of an overturn *I* ever saw. Well, I never go that road but I am pointed out as "the gentleman who upset the Telegraph."

E. What have you done with your cab?

F. Sold it. It was infamously ill built. It was continually upsetting. I'll tell you an odd coincidence. There is an awkward post at the corner of Dover Street. Well; three days successively that confounded cab ran against it, went over, and spilt me. The last time, as we were getting it upon its

wheels again, one of the stage-coach [illegible] out, 'I is arn't worth while to set it up; it will do just in the same way again to-morrow for [illegible] of driving—my tilbury is at the door; and if you have a mind for a ride with me—

F. No, no, no, thank you. But now, Egotist, I shall use no ceremony with you—you must [illegible]. And let me assure you that whatever else may be said of you, it cannot be said that you are either a vain man or an egotist.

E. Why, I flatter myself—. If I know myself at all, certainly vanity is not my foible. And as to egotism, I make it a rule to avoid talking about myself. I never do. I hate the subject. I hate the personal pronoun *I*. I never use it. I would discard it from the alphabet. I never say *I*, if I can avoid it; and I'm right. There are few points on which I pretend to be right, except that—and indeed, when I'm sure I'm right, and that [illegible]. Well; no one understands my character [illegible] as you do; and, though it may hardly be worth knowing, yet there are points about me which I flatter myself I—. Good-day; I go. No one perceives the proper moment for terminating a visit better than I; and if any body hates [illegible] friends or talking of himself—'t is I, 'tis I. [illegible]

SIR MATTHEW MEDDLE.

A SKETCH.

"Save me from my friends! I can protect myself against my enemies."
Henri IV. (of France.)

"On ne donne rien si libéralement que ses conseils."
La Rochefoucauld.

Sir Matthew Meddle is the most obliging creature in the world; consequently—he has done an infinite deal of mischief in it. He *will* assist you: he *will* serve you: he *will* undertake to do for you that which you in vain assure him nobody *can* do satisfactorily but yourself. "I am an idle man," he will say: "I have neither business nor occupation of my own; *your* time is precious; now *do* leave that matter to my management: so far from a trouble, it will be an amusement to me." But, alas! he does not consider that (as in the fable of the frogs) it will be "death to us." And fortunate may you consider it, if you receive such timely

notice of his intention to be (what he calls) serviceable; you may in that case prevent, or, at least, mitigate, the mischievous effects of his good-nature. But 't is his "secret service," against which neither prudence nor human foresight can guard, that destroys you: 't is when he "does good by stealth" that his pernicious kindness operates most powerfully to your injury.

I shall not stop to narrate the particulars of seven marriages of his concocting, the comfortable results of which were two elopements, three separate maintenances, and two divorces; nor of the numerous slight misunderstandings and trifling differences betwixt friends which his attempts to explain, or to reconcile, have brought to the decision of a jury, the arbitrament of the pistol, or (more unhappily still!) aggravated into lasting hostility and enmity unappeasable; nor shall I——. In a word, I will avoid his example of meddling with affairs which concern others, and shall state only a few of the cases in which I myself have been made the victim of his kind intentions.

How lavish soever of his services he may be to the rest of the world, yet Sir Matthew, in holding me, the only son of his favourite sister, in greater affection than any other of his kindred, as I sincerely believe, than any other living creature; it is not to be wondered at that (upon unlucky self he should have perpetrated his

[illegible] and inflicted his friendship with the most determined virulence. For as long as I can remember him, he has been destructively attentive to my interests, and has acted in my behalf with assiduity the most fatal. I may, indeed, date his interference concerning me at a period antecedent to my possession of the faculty of memory, for it commenced even before I had the honour of making my appearance in the world. The effect of this, his first service, has left an irremovable impression, not on my mind only, but on my left cheek!

One day when my mother was in that interesting situation which promised her husband the speedy enjoyment of the honours of paternity, my father and his brother-in-law Sir Matthew were dining with a large party at Long's. Amongst the company was Sir Pepper O'Popper, a gentleman whose temper was extremely irritable, and his sense of hearing not very acute. Like persons in general who labour under the latter infirmity, he was prone to consider every remark which he did not distinctly hear as applied to himself; and would guess at its import from the gesture or from the look of the speaker. The glass had circulated freely, when my father, tasting of a fresh bottle, thrust it aside; and, with an expression of mingled anger and disgust on his countenance exclaimed, "Detestable! 't is as fiery as pepper!"

"What's that you are saying?" cried Sir Pepper; who fancied he heard some unusual observation coupled with his own name.

My father was about to offer a [illegible] explanation of the cause of Sir Pepper's [illegible] hension, when up started Sir Matthew.

"Now, Ned, be quiet, pray be quiet—you are intemperate! let *me* settle this disagreeable affair. My dear Sir Pepper—indeed, now, my father-in-law meant no offence—believe *me* he didn't—if he had—why, in such case, I should have been the first to say, 'throw a bottle at his head,' though he is my brother-in-law."

"I don't hear a word you say, Sir; speak louder, if you please," impatiently cried Sir Pepper.

"In such a case," bawled Sir Matthew, "I should have been the first to advise you to throw a bottle at his head."

Sir Pepper, who had heard nothing but the *conclusion* of Sir Matthew's speech, seized a bottle which he hurled with desperate violence in the direction of my father's head. Had the missile of conviviality fulfilled the intention of the thrower of its course, my father's must have fallen [illegible] the spot; for (though, fortunately, missing it by a hair's breadth), from the force with which it was projected, not only was it itself dashed to atoms against the wall, but it put the [illegible]

[illegible] the aid of the plasterer and the carpenter evidently necessary. [illegible] explanations ensued; but some mediator more adroit than Sir Matthew taking up the affair, the [illegible] apologised for his intemperate conduct towards my father, and, offering him his hand, declared that "the misunderstanding was owing entirely to Sir Matthew Meddle's explanation."

"Hush!" hurriedly whispered my uncle, "under the circumstances, it would not be well for you to quit the party suddenly, so do you remain where you are; but, considering the delicate situation of your wife, should any exaggerated account of this unpleasant affair be conveyed to her——But leave that to my management. Remain here for an hour or so; I'll go home and excuse your absence to my sister."

Sir Matthew rushed down stairs, jumped into his carriage, and desired the coachman to drive full speed to his sister's. Arived there, he knocked and rang as if he had found the house in a blaze.

"What is the matter, Sir?" inquired the servant who opened the door.

"Nothing. I hope your mistress has not yet retired for the night?"

"Not yet, I believe, Sir; my mistress is not very well, but as she has not rung for Mrs. Smith yet, I dare say you will find her in the drawing-room."

"That's fortunate!" Sir Matthew ran up stairs,

and, rushing into the drawing-room, [illegible]
"Bessy, my love, don't be alarmed."
"Alarmed, Matthew! Good heavens! [illegible] happened?"
"I tell you *not* to be alarmed. I [illegible] to prepare you."
"Prepare me!—For what?—Ned: Heaven's sake——"
"'Tis nothing in the world—though it might have been! Poor Ned! When I was [illegible] I saw a man's head dreadfully fractured by a [illegible] thing, but——Now, how ridiculous [illegible] alarmed, when I came on purpose to [illegible] The affair is simply this, my dear sister [illegible] just had a slight disagreement—Now, why [illegible] be alarmed? In fact, it was not a [illegible] but merely a slight misunderstanding with [illegible] officer, who dashed a bottle of claret at [illegible] such violence that it literally smashed [illegible]

At these words his dear sister fainted. [illegible] course of that same night I was ushered [illegible] world, although my appearance had not [illegible] lated upon so soon by at least three [illegible] brilliant claret-stain on my left cheek, [illegible] large as the palm of my hand, in the [illegible] Sir Matthew Meddle's first kind inter[illegible] matters affecting me.

Though an only son, I was never, [illegible] far as the blemish I have just mentioned [illegible]

[illegible] considered as such, a spoiled child. By my father's death, which happened when I was [illegible] years old, I was left entirely under the care and control of my mother. A woman of [illegible]ness, she was aware of the dangers to which temper and all other qualities which go to the formation of character are exposed by the early and undue indulgence which is but too frequently extended to that interesting specimen of human-kind, an "sole pledge of affection." With a strong check upon her own feelings, therefore, which naturally inclined to humour rather than displease me, she never—at least so long as I can recollect—she [illegible] sacrificed the just to the expedient; or, in the more appropriate language of the nursery, she would never allow the dear child to have its own way in anything rather than hear it cry. "Children," she would truly say, "are much earlier and more readily to be taught to distinguish the right and the proper from their contraries, than thoughtless parents give them credit for: they will sometimes, indeed, cunningly *seem* to confound them in order to serve their own little purposes." This may appear to be a long introduction to so small a portion of a short story, but (to say nothing of the natural bias of my mind, which bears me unconsciously into the serious and the philosophical) it is not altogether unnecessary.

My fond uncle's notions on this subject differed

altogether from my mother's. He was for following me in everything, lest opposition should spoil my temper. He thought my complaints for sour apples and indigestible pound-cake were neither unreasonable nor too frequent, and bitterly complained at all—of the length of my lessons and the shortness of my play-time were not without foundation. He would therefore "advise" my mother to relinquish her own system and adopt his. But my mother, though she tenderly loved her brother, entertained not the slightest respect for his understanding; and (her mind wearied, her patience exhausted, and her temper ruffled by his impertinent and perfinacious counsel) the certain consequence, to me, of uncle Meddle's interference in my affairs were tasks lengthened and indulgences abridged, with an occasional whipping for having offended uncle Meddle,—a notion plausible, but by no means true, inasmuch as his unlucky interferences were always the spontaneous suggestions of his officious, volent heart.

In my ninth year I was placed under the care of the Reverend Job Whackall, at that time in the most extensive market for the sale of education, Mile-End Green. There I remained till my twelfth year, when before I quitted this school a prize was offered for the best English essay on the subject of [illegible]. For this I was one of three competitors, and [illegible]

[illegible] said my mother to Sir Matthew, "I [illegible] that Frederick should gain [illegible], it will be such a spur to his exertions [illegible] to Eton. Indeed I have great reason to believe he will, for Mr. Fagmore, the head-usher, [illegible] assured me that Frederick's exercise [illegible] to nothing the best he has seen. To-morrow [illegible] to be sent in to Mr. Whackall, and, on the [illegible], he will award the prize. I earnestly hope my dear boy may win it."

"He shall!" exclaimed Sir Matthew Meddle: and he instantly quitted the room, leaving my mother [illegible] at the heartiness of his exclamation, which she considered as a sure prognostic of success.

Within an hour after this I was agreeably surprised by a visit from uncle Matthew. Leave was asked and obtained that I should go and dine with him at Richmond. "And put your exercise into your pocket, Fred," whispered Sir Matthew.

As we were stepping into the carriage, the kind-hearted Fagmore, who had followed us out, patted me on the head, and said to my uncle, "He 'll beat the best of them, Sir, I 'll answer for it."

We drove to the Castle at Richmond, where, by my uncle's particular desire, we were shown into one of their *quietest* rooms, overlooking the delightful lawn; and, having ordered a dinner of asparagus soup, stewed eels, chicken salad, and apricot tart—

"Now, Fred," said my uncle, "while [illegible] is preparing let me see your exercise."

I handed it to him, and watched [illegible] anxiety his countenance whilst he was engaged in the reading of it.

"Um—um—good—very good, indeed, considering your age. Few boys could do better, and I have very little doubt but——and yet there is nothing like making sure of things: clenching the nail, Fred.?"

"Nothing in the world, Sir," replied I, though not exactly comprehending the drift of his observation.

"You *must* gain the prize, and you shall. Can you keep a secret, Master Fred.?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Well, then, I like your exercise upon the whole, vastly; but there are some objectionable [illegible] some negligences, also, in it. Now, if I [illegible] for you, you won't tell any body?"

"Not for all the world, Sir."

"Then ring for pen, ink, and paper, and [illegible] is done."

After an hour's cutting, and slashing, [illegible] lining—

"There, you rogue!" cried [illegible] "there! the medal is as safe as if it were [illegible] dangling at your button-hole. Now make [illegible] with my alterations and improvements, [illegible] dinner. But not a word of my assistance, you [illegible]"

My thoughts running more upon chicken-salad and apricot-tart than upon my obliging uncle's improvements, mechanically I copied what I saw before me. Dinner was served just when I had finished my labour; so, thrusting my infallible exercise into my pocket, I attacked the good things before me with an appetite needlessly increased by joy at the certainty of my success.

The next morning early the exercises were sent up, and on the morning following, in the presence of the assembled school, the competitors were summoned to hear the decree of our master and judge. For my own part I felt no misgivings; I rested securely on the assistance I had secretly received from my obliging uncle.

An awful frown clouded the brow of the Reverend Job Whackall as he took his seat.

"Little, if at all, satisfied am I," said he, in his usual cramped and formal phraseology, "with either of the three specimens of English composition now submitted to me. But since to the best did I unreservedly promise to deliver the reward of superiority, to the best (albeit, neither of the three be good),—to the best do I decree it. Would I could have awarded it as the reward of merit, positive and unquestionable. As it is, to Master Zachariah Dunder I adjudge the prize."

He retired from the school-room to his private

parlour, desiring Fagmore and me to follow him. Downcast by disappointment, I obeyed.

"Forasmuch as I expected better from this young gentleman, Mr. Fagmore, inasmuch is my displeasure increased; yet less is it directed against him, Sir, for his failure, than you for allowing to be presented to me such a jumble of bombast and blunder! Listen to the passages to which my censure more particularly attaches"—and here he read almost every sentence which my uncle had kindly contributed. The phenomenon of the appearance there of what Fagmore candidly admitted to be *trash*, he was utterly unable to account for: certainly there was nothing of the kind when last he inspected my work; nor did I dare venture to enlighten him on the subject.

When, with tears in my eyes, I communicated to Sir Matthew Meddle the unhappy result of our joint labours,—

"Be comforted, my dear boy," said he; "the fault is altogether mine:—I ought to have re-written the whole for you."

From Turnham Green I was sent to Eton. There, by means of assiduous study and the non-assistance of my uncle, I obtained considerable distinction, and had the good fortune, moreover, to render myself the prime favourite of Dr. * * * *, the head master. A few days previous to my quitting that venerable seminary to enter into active life, I

near the statue of its pious founder, the doctor in earnest conversation with Lord * * * * (the then Secretary of State for the ——Department), who had just come down to visit his son. It was evident to me that I was the subject upon which they were engaged. Presently the doctor beckoned me towards him, and, on my approach, did me the honour of introducing me to his lordship.

"Young gentleman," said Lord * * * *, "Dr. * * * * has mentioned you to me in a manner which does you honour. I understand you are about to return home. Have you decided upon any particular course of life?"

"No, my lord," replied I; "but, if I might choose, I should prefer some official employment."

"Well, Sir," continued his lordship, "it may be in my power to promote your views. Pray do me the favour of calling upon me as soon after your arrival in town as may be convenient to you."

On my return home, I communicated to my mother, and to Sir Matthew Meddle (who was kindly in waiting to welcome me), the fortunate occurrence. My mother was overjoyed at the prospect of fortune, and of distinction also, thus unexpectedly opened to me. Sir Matthew saw me within three steps of becoming prime minister!

"Fred.," exclaimed he, "your fortune is made, unless, indeed, you mar it by any indiscretion of your own. The great political leaders are on the look-out

for talent wherever they are likely to find it. I know they are—they can't do without it. Now, take my advice; don't accept of any petty clerkship, no red-tape affair. Private secretary to his lordship—that's what he wants you for, I'm certain; so don't you be satisfied with anything less."

"But, surely, Sir, as a first step ——"

"First step, indeed! Why be content with a foot in the stirrup when you may take your seat in the saddle? Private secretary—that's the high road to preferment. '*Aut Cæsar aut nullus*,' say I, Fred.; and private secretary you must be."

The next morning I paid my visit to Lord * * * *, and was very graciously received.

"I am a man of business, Sir," said his lordship, "so at once to the point. Dr. * * * * spoke of you in a way which has left no doubt upon my mind of your capabilities for any employment not necessarily requiring practice in office and experience in the world. I am satisfied, however, that when you shall have acquired these, it will not be by lack of ability that your progress will be impeded. Now, Sir, a place is vacant in my office, and immediately under my own eye. The salary attached to it is but 150*l.* a year; but the duties it involves, if well executed, are of a nature to lead to *much higher things*. If you will accept the place, it is at your service. But consider well my offer; consult your friends upon the subject; and in three days from

this favour me with your decision. I have many applications for the post, but shall keep it open till I hear from you." Having concluded, he shook me cordially by the hand, and I withdrew.

So lucky a start in life falls to the lot of but few: neither my mother nor myself, therefore, entertained a moment's doubt upon the propriety of my instantly availing myself of it; so, without hesitation, we resolved that on the next day I should (as the French express it) "offer my adhesion."

But my kind uncle thought differently: he had no notion of seeing his dear nephew an official drudge: he knew best, as he said, what was good for me, and what I was capable of; and private secretary I should be before I was a week older.

"Pray, brother," said my mother, in the most imploring tone imaginable; "*pray* don't interfere in this matter. You *mean* well—I *know* you do; but there is a fatality in all your good intentions. Now, promise me that you will neither see Lord * * * *, nor speak to him, nor write to him upon this business."

"I promise," replied Sir Matthew; "but leave the matter to my management, and if Fred. be not private secretary, never trust me again." Saying which, he departed.

"What *can* he intend to do?" exclaimed my mother in alarm. "His interference, which is always unfortunate, must be prevented. Do, my dear Fre-

derick, go to Lord **** very early in the morning, and accept the place."

Having ascertained that his lordship had left town, and that he would not return till *ten* o'clock the following morning, I left a note to acquaint him that I intended to do myself the honour of waiting upon him at *half-past* ten "concerning the affair in question." And now, thought I, I defy Sir Matthew and the very best of his good intentions!

The next morning, as the chimes sounded the half-hour, I was ushered into the presence of the Secretary of State for the —— Department. He was writing, and received me with cold civility; and, scarcely raising his eyes from the paper upon which he was occupied, desired I would take a seat. Then—still not looking at me—he slowly shoved a newspaper a few inches across the table towards where I was sitting, and requested I would read a paragraph against which he had placed an ink-mark. The paragraph was as follows:—

"We understand that Mr. Frederick G**** who has just returned from Eton, loaded with the highest academical honours which that celebrated foundation can bestow, has been offered a *paltry place* in the office of Lord ****, Secretary for the —— Department. We are unwilling to believe that such an offer can have emanated from his lordship himself, whose discernment and liberality are well known. Our re-

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foremost must mean the situation of *private secretary* to his lordship, for which Mr. G * * * is eminently qualified, and which is at present filled by Sir W. L * * *, who, we think, is utterly *un*qualified for it, although we entertain a very high respect for his talents, which, we are of opinion, are well adapted to the duties of the place *said to be* offered to Mr. G * * *. We would advise Mr. Frederick G* * * to remonstrate with his *friend* Lord * * * * on the subject; and we doubt not the Right Honourable statesman (whose abilities, by-the-by, though we think highly of them, are, we apprehend, misplaced in his present post, and ought to be transferred to the War Department) will instantly see the propriety of making the change we suggest."

The phrase most commonly used in describing situations of horror and dismay—situations, in short, of the nature of the present—is, "I wished that the earth would open and swallow me." Now I did not wish any such thing, simply because I was not in a frame of mind to form a wish of any kind whatever; but certain I am that had I been standing on the brink of a roaring volcano, I should have thrown myself into it head foremost. The paper dropped from my hands; huge cold drops of perspiration fell from my brow; whilst my lips and throat were parched with intolerable heat. I opened my mouth, or rather, I should say, my mouth opened itself to its fullest extent; my tongue felt as if held fast by a

whip-cord. After several moments—*hours* they appeared to me—of utter annihilation of the power of speech, I at length contrived to wriggle my tongue into something like motion, and stammered forth—

"My—my lord, I—your lordship must—I am sure your lordship cannot for a moment—I solemnly declare——"

Without deigning to desist from his occupation, or even to honour me with a look, Lord * * * * addressed me in these words:—

"I shall not trouble you for an explanation, Sir; but it may gratify you to know that I have so far profited by the kind advice bestowed upon me"—(and here he just pointed with the feather-end of his pen to the newspaper)—"that I have within this half-hour given the 'paltry place' to the son of a much-valued friend of my own. Good morning, Sir."

How I reached home I know not—by a kind of brute instinct which led me there, perhaps;—but, on my arrival thither, I found Sir Matthew Meddle pacing up and down in front of the iron railings with four newspapers in his hand.

"Ah, ha! Fred.! I 've done it for you. Have you seen the newspapers, my boy?"

"I have seen but one, Sir, and that one is many."

"Then you have not seen my paragraph about the private secretaryship?"

"Yours! And did you write that fatal paragraph?"

"Fatal paragraph! Here's gratitude for you! Here I have it in *all* the morning papers; I have been up half this night, to the loss of my blessed rest, making copies of it for *all* the evening papers, and for *all* the Sunday papers, and——Fatal paragraph, indeed!"

I explained to him that it was just so much good labour thrown away, for that one of them had done all the mischief which the utmost exercise of his obliging services could have accomplished.

Who was the cause of my lately losing an important lawsuit by kindly *volunteering* evidence which made against my case? Who made me pay at an auction 900*l.* more than I should otherwise have paid for a certain property, by considerately bidding for it on my account (though not by my desire) in opposition to an agent whom I had secretly employed to purchase it? Who was the cause that I am *not* married to the woman for whom I would have died? and that I *am* married to the woman who will be the death of me? Need I add—the everlasting, eternal, sempiternal Sir Matthew Meddle! Sir Matthew Meddle!! Sir Matthew Meddle!!!

Like a loyal subject and true, I would rather sing "God save the Queen" than any song sung by singing mortal in this singing age; but heedless of

statutes of treason, and of attorney-general, I declare that I am inclined to shout forth "*Vive Henri Quatre!*" as often as I recollect that it is to that monarch we are indebted for the exclamation—"*Save me from my* FRIENDS! *I can protect myself against my enemies.*"

A SLASHING ARTICLE.

"He made the giants first, and then he killed them."—Tom Thumb.

Miscellanies in Prose and Verse. By Addison Pope, Esq. 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 365. Greenwich: Hixcomb and Slidge, 1833.

The issuing of a work in prose and verse from the classic press of Greenwich, is an event which must ever stand prominent in the annals of British literature. No sooner is the town long famed for wooden legs and white-bait raised into political importance by being allowed to send a brace of representatives to Parliament, than it asserts its claim to distinction in the assembly of the Muses; and while Dundas and Barnard are appointed its guardian angels in the senate, Addison Pope, Esquire, under the auspices of Messieurs Hixcomb and Slidge, stands forth its champion in the flowery fields of song. Tremble, ye Murrays, ye Moxons, ye Longman-Hurst-Green-Brown-Longman-Orme-Rees-Orme-Brown-and-Co.'s—tremble, and hide your devoted heads, for Hixcomb and Slidge are arrayed against you! And you, ye Southeys and ye Moores, yea, all

and every of you who court Apollo's smile, fly, vanish, *sauve qui peut*; for, lo! a bard is here, the thunder of whose very name—ADDISON POPE!—must annihilate you! When Lord John Russell was compounding his Reform-bill, little did he imagine that the same clause which should give political life to Greenwich was destined to call forth from his modest obscurity a poet and a proser; yet, that such is the case, we shall prove by Addison Pope, Esquire's, own declaration:—first, presuming to exhort Lord John to proceed in his career of enfranchisement, and give at least one member to that ancient and *independent* portion of the empire, Eel-pie Island, Twickenham. Thereby not only might another poet be called into existence, but justice would be done to the unrepresented Thames eels, who, as yet, have reason to complain of the undue preference shown to their more fortunate rivals lower down the river,—the Thames flounders. But we must proceed to a more particular notice of the "Miscellanies," commencing with an account of their origin, and the immediate cause of their being given to the world. Since, in the latter point, Addison Pope, Esquire, has manifested a degree of patriotism worthy of better times, we shall quote his own words. In his preface he says:—

"It may appear trivial, nay childish, nay almost foolish, to some. [Courage, Addison Pope, Esquire! assert it nevertheless!] should attribute my early and constant propensity to versifying, to that very

[illegible] being Pope; Pope being also the name of Pope, the great poet!" [So, then, thanks to our author, it is at length brought to light that Pope's name was Pope!]; "and to the circumstance of my sponsors fortunately bestowing upon me that of Addison, the great master of the prosaic art, I am indebted for my resolution to try my skill in that branch of composition. Never, perhaps, but for these lucky coincidences had Literature marked me for her own."—*Preface*, p. ii.

"What 's in a name?" asks Shakspeare. "Everything," replies Addison Pope. Not "the gods," but the accident of his family name being Pope, "made him poetical;" whilst to his sponsors is the world indebted for another "master of the prosaic art." For the first there was no helping it: fate and his ancestors willed it so. He was fore-destined to be born Pope, so a poet he must be. But a plague on all godfathers and godmothers! What had they to do to christen him Addison, and thus add one more to the already too-lengthened line of prose-writers? If we utter this ill-humouredly it is not that we object to our author's prose, for, in conscience, we consider it in all respects equal to his verse. But did his sponsors never reflect that the longitude is yet undiscovered? If ever they did, why did they not call him Newton? Or, did it never occur to their recollections, that for years we have been racking our heads and breaking our hearts to find a perpetual motion? They had only to name their young hopeful Archimedes, and then had the thing been done for us (as Lord Duberly says) "in the twinkling of

a bed-post." But as there is consolation to be found under most human calamities, so is there in this: the "young stranger" *might* have been dubbed by them Prometheus, in which case we hold it a certainty that, ere now, Prometheus Pope had invented a fire whereby to set the Thames in a blaze, and destroyed everything on its bosom, from the Dreadnought at Greenwich down to a Twickenham wherry. Well, as it is, "Literature has *marked* him for her own" (as cautious graziers ruddle their sheep, we suppose); and wisely has Madam Literature done in thus asserting her property in this pet lamb of the Muses.

"Never thinking of publishing, I wrote from impulse, because I could not help it, as it were. I wrote to please myself, and I succeeded. The critics I heeded not; I despised their lash; I hurled defiance at their heads *then*, even as I do *now*, when I stand in print before them."—*Preface*, p. iii.

We are, as we trust we shall ever continue to be, the mildest, kindest-hearted critics in the universe, else might we take exceptions at certain points in this short passage. As to a gentleman's boast, that he wrote *to please himself* and *succeeded* in so doing, it is just so much good vapour thrown away upon an achievement which we really consider to be matter of every-day occurrence. We will not pronounce an opinion in opposition to Addison Pope, Esquire; but with becoming humility, we will ask him, whether, generally speaking, success in pleasing others be not

a little more difficult of attainment? Not having the slightest desire to argue the question personally, we shall merely observe, that *he* may be very hard to please; we, innocents that we are! are not so. For the which, Addison Pope, Esquire, be thou grateful. The next sentence forces us to exclaim, "the captain is a bold man!" He "heeds not the critics;" he "*despises their lash!*"

("He jests at scars that never felt a wound!")—

and, in so far as we are concerned, he is in no danger of tasting it. We have no such implement as a thong in our possession; and even if we had, our tender natures would recoil from the use of it. Yet, after all, perhaps, it is not so much in mercy as in fear that we deal gently with what, unquestionably, is a strong provocation to resentment. However bold we may be when meaner spirits take the field against us, we are bound in candour to confess that we love ourselves too well to encounter a hero who, from the highest Alps of Greenwich, "hurls defiance at our heads," not only when intrenched behind his manuscript, but even *now*, when he stands in unprotected print before us.

"Never, as I said before, dreaming of exposing my humble *effusia* to the glaring orb of day—"

We beg pardon for the interruption, but really our author has said no such thing "before." We admit he has expressed a similar idea, but, clearly,

he was then writing under the *prestic* influence of the name of Addison. "Never thinking of publishing" was what he "said *before*;" what he says *now* is evidently inspired by his *poetical* namesake. *Effusia!* 'tis a sweetly-pretty word. We remember a prim footman announcing at a party Mr. Foot and his two daughters, as "Mr. Foot and the two Miss *Feet*"—*two Foots* being repugnant to John's notions of grammatical accuracy. Standing somewhat in awe of gentlemen who hurl defiance at people's heads, we dare not request of Addison Pope to apply this anecdote in any way whatever; but, in friendship, we exhort him to reflect that (utterly as he may despise the *critic's* lash) there is suspended over the master's desk in every day-school at Greenwich a small collection of twigs, which—But no matter; we must not be nice about trifles.

"Never, as I said before, dreaming of exposing my humble *effusia* to the glaring orb of day, still would they have slumbered in the silent darkness of my portfolio but for the passing of the glorious Reform-bill, which at once gave representatives in parliament to my long-neglected native town (for I had the honour of being born at No. 7, Ship Street, although I now live near Shooter's Hill), and roused me to a proper sense of what was due to the occasion. I knew that the eyes of England would be upon us. Greenwich had long enjoyed its astronomers, it now possessed its politicians; and lasting would have been the reproach had it not put forth *one* poet, even though humble as myself. The thought filled me like the vast ocean; a voice [illegible] the roar of thunder whispered me to buckle on my armour; with the speed of lightning I collected my manuscripts, and, rushing forth like the clouds before the stormy blast, I entered the shop of Messrs. Slocomb and Slidge. These intelligent friends (for so I may [illegible]

them) instantly seized the idea; and, with that munificence for which they are proverbial, agreed, for the honour of our now represented town, to publish my work entirely at their own risk, reserving no other advantage to themselves than the profits of the first edition *only*; I, of course, being answerable for the expense of paper, printing, advertisements, &c. This then, reader, is the history of the origin, progress, and completion of the work for which your indulgence is now" &c. &c.—*Preface*, pp. iv. v. vi.

In an article purely literary we would, as much as possible, avoid allusions to politics; yet, whatever may be our opinion concerning other portions of Lord John's Reform-bill, we cannot refrain from expressing our satisfaction at that provision in Schedule C which gave representatives to Greenwich, and stimulated Addison Pope to the publication of his Miscellanies. But what less could he do? The eyes of England were upon him! And then the *munificence* of Hixcomb and Slidge—whose virtue, it seems, is not its sole reward, for (to say nothing of the terms of publication) to them the volume is dedicated, in verses unequalled, perhaps, in the language. We shall not stop to point out the peculiar beauties sprinkled through the last-quoted paragraph: the most careless reader must remark them. Who but must admire the noble passage commencing with, "The thought filled me like the vast ocean," and, gradually swelling, till it reaches a climax of unparalleled grandeur—"I entered the shop of Messrs. Hixcomb and Slidge!!" The "whisper like the roar of thunder" may not be perfectly intelligible, but it is new; and in an age considerably later than

that in which Solomon declared that there was nothing new under the sun, we take novelty to be worth obtaining at any price. That fine figure, too, of buckling on his armour! Now, any one but such a poet as ours would have been satisfied with telling us that he put on his coat, waistcoat, and smalls. Besides the beauties of this paragraph, its utility, also, is evident—not so much to the present generation, perhaps, as to posterity. There are still doubts as to the birth-place of Homer; so, to save all trouble, and doubt, and anxiety to future readers and commentators, Addison Pope, Esquire, is so considerate as to announce that he "had the *honour* of being born at No. 7, Ship-street."

"Thy modesty's a flambeau to thy merit."

The honour belongs to No. 7, Ship-street, not to the illustrious poet.

We shall quote no more of the preface (which extends to eighteen pages), the remainder being made up of deprecatory common-place (we beg Addison Pope's pardon for using this expression, but, in so long-winded a proem, *the* Addison himself might have been driven to a similar strait); entreaties for a merciful judgment in consideration of *the unripe youth of the writer*" (at page 76 we find "[illegible] addressed to the Rev. Peter Flynn, on my entering my *thirty-ninth year*;") and, what would the reader think?—an appeal to the critics to "apply the [illegible]

if applied it must be, with a gentle, not a lacerating hand!!!"

Somewhat of discrepancy might, at first sight, appear between the "extreme youth" and the "thirty-ninth year" of the poet. But let it be remembered that youth is a relative term: at thirty-nine the patriarchs were mere lads; and, compared with "immortality"—for immortality, it seems, is to be the term (if we may so express it) of Addison Pope's existence—a warbler at thirty-nine is but a baby in leading-strings. We quote the verses above alluded to:—

"Haply I may aspire too far!
Statesmen and warriors all may die,"

[Such accidents are, undoubtedly, within the range of possibility:]

"But poets oft immortal are—
Then why not I?"

A question so perplexing and profound that we shall not venture a reply to it.

But the most remarkable passage in the whole of this extraordinary composition is the concluding one. The intrepid despiser of the lash, the redoubtable hurler of defiance, now that his shoulders are bared and the thong is flourishing in the air, implores us to forbear from laying on the stripes with a "lacerating hand." Indeed we are not to be inveigled into doing any such thing as lashing with a lacerating hand. We have penetration to perceive, and sufficient skill to avoid, the snare

which is so adroitly set for us. Addison Pope, Esquire, only *pretends* to cry *peccavi:* showing the white feather, as the hour of battle approaches, is a mere *ruse* on his part; he would entice us to within range of his thunders, provoke us to strike, and then, with deadly effect, hurl down upon our poor heads the defiance with which we are threatened at page iii. of the preface. No, no; we are peaceable critics; and, so far from "lashing," we shall continue as we have begun; and praise, as it must deserve, whatever in the volume before us our limits will permit us to notice.

The book consists of exactly three hundred and sixty-five pages; so that, by the exercise of a common degree of temperance,—by just sipping and tasting a page a day,—here is an intellectual banquet which will last the reader one entire year. The feast prepared is one of the greatest possible variety: the solids, or prose papers, being essays on almost every subject that ever occupied the mind of man, whilst the lighter dishes and sweets are allegories, epistles, fables, satires, sonnets, songs, epigrams, fragments of a tragedy, fragments of an epic poem, &c. &c. Hoping in our extracts from the preface furnished the sample or two of the author's powers as a "master of the prosaic art," we shall merely give the titles of three or four of his lucubrations, or "thoughts" as he calls them. We have "Thoughts on the superiority of Virtue to Beauty," "Thoughts on

perance," "Thoughts on the propriety of obeying the Ten Commandments," "Thoughts on the cruelty of murder" [subjects all of startling novelty!], "Thoughts on the National Debt and how to pay it" [one of the *hows* being by a voluntary public subscription—a *how* which, in our opinion, implies too great a reliance on public generosity and public patriotism], and "Thoughts on the advantages of making Greenwich the metropolis of England." In this last-named paper, Addison Pope, Esquire, suggests a measure which, however creditable to him for the lively interest he takes in the prosperity and aggrandisement of his native town, would, if carried into execution, not only rob London of its proud pre-eminence, but doom it to speedy desertion and decay.

"I cannot forget," says he, "that the glorious Virgin Queen Elizabeth, who beat the Spanish Armada, once held her Court on our pellucid banks" [we suppose he means on the banks of our pellucid stream], "and why not now?" [*Why not now?* But doubtless he would merely ask why the Court is not held there now; for we can hardly think him so unconscionable as to expect that the Virgin Queen should be alive at this time of day.] "What a site," he continues,—"what a site for the capital of a great naval kingdom! I see our splendid hospital rising in the foreground, that *rus in urbe*, or in other words, that *otium cum dignitate* for the recep-

tion of disabled seamen." [Have a care, friend Pope! Dr. Burney is behind you.] "I see our lovely park, for air and recreation, spreading out behind; I see buildings rising upon buildings crowding all around this marble nucleus" [but, then, what becomes of the park?]; "and then I marvel why our navies are not made to ride on this spot," [not in the park, surely!], "inspiring our seamen, as they sail away for battle, with the view of the refuge that awaits them should they return, weather-beaten, old, and crippled."

Why such is not the case, we take to be for reasons best known to the Lords of the Admiralty. But, seriously, we, as inhabitants of the present capital, feeling as ardently for the existence of *our* town as Addison Pope feels for the wellbeing of *his*, at once enter our protest against his scheme, and call upon the Secretary of State, or whomsoever else it may concern, to nip this ambitious project in the bud.

So much for our author in his quality of *Addison*. We now proceed to give a small taste of him under the influence of his poetical association. The first specimen shall be his poetical dedication of his work to his publishers:—

"Hixcomb and Slidge, my friends, to thee
I dedicate my artless rhymes
(Though mix'd with humble prose they be),
That thus our names in after times
May cling together side by side,
And on the stream of memory ride;

"And this Posterity shall know,
The grateful debt to thee I owe.
Little thou thought'st ——"

Little *thou* thought'st! Does he mean Hixcomb or Slidge here? We do not ask the question impertinently, but, really, for information.

"Little thou thought'st, when serving me,
My artless muse by setting free"—

—a pretty poetical expression for publishing a duodecimo.—

"Your names ——"

Your *names*. 'T is all right again. We began to apprehend a dissolution of the interesting partnership.

"Your names should stand for ever forth,
As patrons of poetic worth.
This lesson shall these lines afford:
Virtue is sure of its reward."

Perhaps the most remarkable point in this effusion is the assurance with which the poet asserts his own immortality, and his power of conferring it upon others. Like a true son of Apollo as he is, he entertains not the slightest doubt of his shaking hands with Posterity. Milton felt this confidence in his after-fame, and why should not Addison Pope, Esquire? With respect to the moral "these lines afford," we entirely agree with it; but we must take the liberty to express a doubt as to whether all virtue is so rewarded.

We now open the book at random (for in the profusion of good things we cannot fall amiss), and at page 97 we find :—

"SONG.

"*Obligingly set to Music by* MISS MARIANNA SHANKS, *of Greenwich.*

"Over the sea, over the sea,
Thy faithful sailor soon must go,
To part from thee, to part from thee,
With pangs which none but lovers know.

"Thy faithful tar, thy faithful tar,
What qualms, alas! he soon must feel!
On billows far, on billows far,
Which cause the lessening ship to reel!

"I quit thee now, I quit thee now,
Yet Hope forbids me to despair;
Again to *thou*, again to *thou*,
I 'll soon return, my gentle fair!"

The music to this exquisite little poem we have not had the good fortune to meet with; but, judging from the melodious name of the composer, Miss Marianna Shanks (the St. Cecilia of Greenwich), we doubt not it is in all respects worthy of the verses it accompanies. This song, taken as a whole, is an imitation—of no individual writer certainly, but a race—the song-writers for the fashionable music-shops. It strongly resembles, too, many of the verses we find in the *libretti* of modern operas. We must not, however, be understood as noticing the imitation in the way of objection; on the contrary, we consider it as a proof of the wondrous power

Addison Pope, Esquire. It is a principle with the French critics, that, in literature, if you rob your man, you are bound to kill him: in what you do, you must outdo him; else you are but a vulgar thief, a timid plagiary. Now here is robbery and murder with a vengeance! Addison Pope has, in this single specimen, not only stolen all that is worth stealing from his competitors—the race of song-writers aforesaid—but annihilated them at a blow. His power in this instance is equalled only by the tremendous effect with which he hurls defiance at critics' heads. Prudently bearing in mind this terrific propensity of his, we shall not venture to speak of faults in the gem we have presented to our readers. But may we ask a question or two? What kind of tar, or sailor, is the person who is going "over the sea?" He talks of the "*qualms* he soon must feel on the billows." It is many weeks since we visited Greenwich and enjoyed the advantages of conversing on naval topics with any of the pensioners, but the expression strikes us as being somewhat unseamanlike. However, for any thing we know to the contrary, he may be a fresh-water sailor contemplating a first voyage on the real ocean; in which case our question were impertinent. Again, "the lessening ship" is a phenomenon observable only from the shore. We apprehend that to "the faithful tar on billows far," it is not the vessel that appears to lessen, but the land. But, as we before hinted, we may be wrong. One more

question, and we have done. "Again to thee!" Might not "Again to *thee*," we will not venture to say be better, but more correct? Yet, plague on us! what are we thinking about! Not even the genius of Addison Pope himself could make *thee* rhyme to *now*; and as Reason is often compelled to submit to Rhyme, it would be captious indeed were Madam Grammar to complain of a slight violence.

"Yet Hope forbids me to despair,"

is a line of excelling beauty, and of unquestionable truth, too. To forbid despair is the only duty we have known attributed to Hope: her powers being thus limited, we are the more astonished, therefore, at our author having made so much of the matter.

Amongst the "Epistles" we find one "Addressed to Decimus Jelf, Esq., of Skrimsby Park, Sussex, after a long absence." It begins—

"Tell me, my friend, nor let me ask in vain,
To Greenwich wilt thou never come again?"

And to a question propounded in verse so smooth and flowing, Decimus Jelf, Esq., would be little less than a brute were he not to reply.

The "Satires" and "Epigrams" are bitter enough in all conscience, but, in general, too local for our apprehension. We give a specimen of one, during the composition of which the shade of Pope must mean "the little nightingale of Twickenham" must have been at the elbow of his illustrious successor.

SATIRE IV.

"Argument.—The Poet being refused by Cl-rk, the landlord of the Sh-p Tavern at Gr-nw-ch" (all duly mysterious!) "a private room for himself and a small party, invokes the aid of the Satiric Muse—his friend Dulditouch in vain to restrain his satiric rage.

P. Nay, sweet friend, or else—

Friend. My friend, forbear.

P. Not I; my wrath shall rend the trembling air.
Shall Cl-rk presume—

F. Nay, prythee—

P. Let me speak,
And on his head my direst vengeance wreak.
Shall J-ck-on, W-lks, and S-mps-on come from town,
Order a dinner at per head a crown;
Shall *I* preside, and shall this Cl-rk *presume*,
Nor (!) show my party to a private room?
Perish the thought!

F. Chee shote—

P. Nay, tell not me!
My wrongs and rage the universe shall see:
Lovegrove's, Molloy's, the Crown, the Greyhound, all,
All save the Sh-p my patron now shall call,
Blackheath's Green Man, e'en that—

F. Thy rage restrain.

P. No, Cl-rk *shall never see my face again.*
But come, my muse! descend! present thy thong!
If there be force in virtue or in song,
Long shall this l-ndl-rd rue the luckless day
When from his door he turned the bard away.
Me and my party, though but small, select;
Gods! must I think!—

F. Once more, my friend, reflect," &c.

And thus, for about a hundred and fifty lines, the Poet goes on vituperating, and his friend (as friends frequently do) making bad worse by his interference. We, in our charity, sincerely hope that the effects of this terrible philippic are not quite so awful

as the Poet expected; but that the kitchen fires of the "Sh-p Tavern" are occasionally seen to blaze.

The cutting epigram "On the Nose of a Certain Person," must for many a night have broken the sleep of the "certain person," whoever he may be.

"Well may we say that Robert's nose
Must be remarked *where'er it goes.*"

At page 277, we find an elegy beginning—

"O woe, O woe!"

And on the opposite page, "A Waggoner's Address to his Horses," which appropriately commences with—

"Wo-ho! Wo-ho!"

And now, having been led by the rare excellences of the work before us far beyond the limits we had assigned to our review of it, we must beg leave to use the Waggoner's exclamation, and cry "Wo-ho!" to our pen; congratulating the universe, and Greenwich in particular, on the appearance of such a writer as Addison Pope, Esquire, and the world of letters on such an addition to its patrons and publishers as the munificent Messrs. Hixcomb and Slidge.

*** "Being confined by a sprained ankle at a lone farm-house in Herefordshire," says the critic, "and entirely out of the reach of any library where I might procure the new publications, I was under the necessity of *imagining* a book. This 'air-drawn' volume I then 'cut up' after the most approved fashion. That no such work exists as is here reviewed, I conceive to be a matter of not the smallest consequence: it so frequently happens that readers of reviews read nothing else; and *as* frequently, that of works *professed* to be criticised, we have little more given to us than their titles."

BEAUTIES

OF

THE MODERN DRAMA,

SELECTED FROM

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS.

VIRTUE'S HARVEST HOME; A COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS, BY T—— M——, ESQ.

BRITON'S GLORY; A LOYAL COMIC OPERA, BY T—— D——, ESQ.

LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE; A GENTEEL COMEDY, IN FIVE ACTS, BY SIR L—— S——.

THE CRIMSON HERMITS; OR, THE RIVER ROCK. A MELODRAMA, IN TWO ACTS, BY THE STAGE-CARPENTERS OF THE LEGITIMATE THEATRES-ROYAL.

BEAUTIES

OF

THE MODERN DRAMA.

SELECTED FROM UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS.

I FORGET who it was that, on beholding some stupendous monument of the labour and ingenuity of former times, exclaimed, "How much less durable is man than his own works!" There is much general truth in this remark; yet there is one class of human labourers so very far without the pale of its application, as, indeed, to form an exemplification of the direct reverse of it. The industrious persons to whom I allude are our living dramatists. By "living dramatists," I do not mean Shakspeare, Congreve, Farquhar, Sheridan, and others, who, in a higher sense of the phrase, may be so termed;

but the *bonâ fide* eating, drinking, walking (I had nearly said thinking), and scribbling gentlemen, who still go on adding to our stock of *rational* pleasures; the immortals who serve as a sort of posterity to themselves, by having, some of them, outlived, by at least ten years, the eternity of fame they promised themselves twenty or five-and-twenty years ago. To a poet, how frightful is the idea of falling into absolute nothingness, and leaving "not a rack behind!" How melancholy to behold his own column of renown, erected with so much labour, stone upon stone, mouldering in decay, and sinking into oblivion; "to see Fame," as the Irishman said, "walk away with itself." How agonizing the reflection, in his own particular case, that "man is much more durable than his own works!" These considerations have operated powerfully on my mind; and it is with the humane intention of sparing the *élite* of our cotemporary dramatic geniuses a portion of this moral suffering, that I have undertaken the task of collecting a few of their scenes, and ensuring them a perpetuity of fame by enshrining them in these pages.

But, besides this, I have another object in view in this enterprize; one of more extensive utility; namely, that of assisting the progress of such of the rising generation as may be ambitious of increasing our stock of dramatic literature. Cotemporary fame is fickle; the *chef-d'œuvre* that brings

all London together at the beginning of the season, is forgotten long before the end of it; and thus the young aspirant to dramatic honours is left destitute of the models by which alone his taste ought to be formed, and without which, as his constant guides, success is hopeless. Would he compose a rural, agricultural, Sunday-schoolical, farcical, melodramatical comedy, all about love and murder, in the style of M——; a naval and military loyal effusion, in five acts, *à la* D——; a *genteel* comedy, *à la* S——; or a wonder-stirring melodrama in all styles, or in no style; which way shall he look for assistance? The glorious models offered for imitation by these writers, alas! are already scattered, lost, and forgotten; and he must either follow the impulses of his own taste and genius,—write from his own pure inspirations—or lean on the arm of Congreve and Sheridan, now too weak even to support themselves: and neither of these alternatives is likely to prove to his advantage in his dramatic career. It is for this purpose, as well as to save them from the oblivion in which a few weeks would otherwise have involved them, that I collect together a few slips and patterns of the favourites (not of the day, but) of *yesterday*, and deposit them in a museum, where the student may, at his ease, contemplate the finest models, in the various branches of dramatic composition, which modern times have afforded.

"And why not" (says the first person) "should I take pains to take up this paper;) "why not [illegible] young writer to follow the impulses of [illegible] and genius?" Because, if you did, he would [illegible] his human nature as he finds it—ordinary [illegible] women, of common proportions, having neither more nor less than one head, two arms, and two legs each. "Well?"—Well; and at [illegible] Fair such beings would not draw a halfpenny; [illegible] you must exhibit giants or dwarfs, monsters having something extraordinary in their conformation—two heads, or eyes in their stomachs. "I [illegible] of our national, patent, *legitimate* drama [illegible] you reply with Bartholomew fair."—This all [illegible] "But Congreve, Farquhar, Sheridan—[illegible] allow them to serve as models?"—Because [illegible] grove, Farquhar, and Sheridan are out of [illegible] "And why are they out of fashion?" [illegible] same reason that truth is out of fashion [illegible] habitual perverter of it; that the shades [illegible] —fresh green fields, and clear blue skies [illegible] pleasure to a debauchee who has [illegible] years of his existence in the vilest dissipation [illegible] town affords; or that light delicately flavoured [illegible] gundy seems insipid to the palate of a [illegible] I believe I make myself intelligible, [illegible] me no further." The days are [illegible] English audience could find delight [illegible] that

[illegible] nothing better than such absurdities as a probable plot, natural characters, wit, and common sense. I shall not pretend to decide whether the public taste is better or worse than it was; I merely assert that it is changed; and that what satisfied the *audiences* of our good old play-writers would not now satisfy the *spectators* of our modern *playwrights*. The public has removed its seat of judgment from where it was formerly placed, to a point as distant from it as pole is from pole, though an inch may compass the space between—from the ear to the eye. But I meant to say only a few words as an introduction to the following scenes, and I am wandering into a preface. The public taste is such as it is; many causes have contributed to make it so; and none more effectually than the *genius* of our modern dramatists.

I have already stated my motives for making the following collection: it would be useless to recapitulate them. The scenes which will be given are from original and unpublished manuscripts. Each is so deeply imbued with the peculiarities of its respective author, his beauties, and the characteristics of his style, that it will be needless to give his name at length—his initials only will be added to the title of his work. I may, perhaps, occasionally subjoin a note, or short commentary, for the purpose of pointing out any latent beauty, or placing it in a more advantageous light, or exhibiting those less

obvious peculiarities by which the particular author under consideration is distinguished from his brother peers.

Without further delay, I present the reader with

No. I.

OF SPECIMENS OF

THE MODERN DRAMA.

BEING A SCENE FROM VIRTUE'S HARVEST HOME,

A Comedy, in Five Acts, by T—— M——, Esq.

Dramatis Personæ.

LORD BLUEDEVIL.
LORD DASHTOWN.
SQUIRE CHEVYCHACE.
FARMER WHEATSHEAF.
LADY ROSEVALLEY.
DAME WHEATSHEAF.

Scene.—The interior of Farmer Wheatsheaf's
In a corner of the apartment hangs a
On a table in front is seen 'Bunyan's
gress,' a Cheshire cheese, and a brown

the spinning at the back, a farm-yard, with a pig-sty, hen-coop, dunghill, several ploughs, plough-shares, ploughtails, ploughmen, ploughboys, &c.

Enter FARMER WHEATSHEAF, *followed by* DAME WHEATSHEAF.

Farmer. I tell 'ee, deame, it be o' noa youse; I wonna do't.*

* The decline, or, strictly speaking, the fall of the British drama has been attributed to the present uniform state of society. The collision of ranks and interests, it is said, has so smoothened and polished us, and rendered one human being so exactly like another, that the dramatic painter can no longer find prominent and characteristic materials for the employment of his pencil. But I suspect that those who utter this complaint draw their notions of society, not from an observation of society itself, but from the pictures which pass for true representations of it on the stage; and am of opinion that society is very little to blame in the matter. There was plenty of *character* in the year 1500, but there was no MOLIERE. SHAKSPEARE found characters as long as he chose to look for them, so did CONGREVE in his time, so did SHERIDAN much later, so does KENNY now. Even REYNOLDS, who with an extraordinary talent for observation unluckily combined a not very fastidious taste, exhibited, in his earlier productions, many lively and natural sketches. PICARD, DUVAL, and some other of the best French dramatists, even up to this very moment, occasionally find a character which had escaped the search or observation of former writers; or which, at least, had not been exhibited in all the various points of view of which it was susceptible, and in which a skilful artist might place it. The fact is, that *matter* is not wanting for those who know where to look for it, or how to use it when they have discovered it, but that——I will illustrate what *I was about to say* by an anecdote. I one day called on a portrait painter, who complained bitterly to me of his want of patronage.

Dame. What! not if my lord do tell me?

Farmer. (*Firmly.*) Noa; for there be [illegible] Lord (*pointing upwards*) as do tell I not to.

Dame. Why, then, Gaffer, as sure as [illegible] bacon, you'll be clean out of my lord's books.

Farmer. Books! Look'ee, deame; thof I be nought but Gaffer Wheatsheaf, there be *one* book I do vally more nor ony other. Do thee know, Missus, what that book do zay?

Dame. Noa; I can't zay as I do.

Farmer. More sheame vor thee, deame, more sheame vor thee, I zay. Then I'll tell 'un what it zay—Thou shalt commit no murder.

"To be candid with you," said I, "you seldom catch a [illegible] never give character to your portraits." "And what's [illegible] replied he: "likenesses now a days are d—d hard to [illegible] are not what they were in Sir Joshua's time." The truth [illegible] friend was a bad painter.

But as a compensation for the absence of character [illegible] called) from the modern drama, we have *dialect*. The [illegible] invention of this easy and palpable expedient is, I believe, [illegible] author of "Virtue's Harvest Home." "To hold the [illegible] —*Forbellire*, is the precept by which the efforts of [illegible] have been mostly guided. Farmers and clodhoppers [illegible] Riding or the West Riding, from Somersetshire or [illegible] are his principal models. He is the very Shakspeare of [illegible] His clodpoles are clodpoles from top to toe. [illegible] is dangerous; and his success in that line has [illegible] skilful adventurers to follow him, that I almost [illegible] a continental ploughboy, or a pedlatic [illegible] dased on the stage.

Dame. Truly and soh it do, Gaffer, and soh it do.

Farmer. I ha' gotten a bit o' a notion as how that be plain spoken enough, deame; and I wonna kill him* nor hit the lords ——

Dame. (*Greatly agitated.*) Kill him! kill whom, Gaffer?

Farmer. (*Still more agitated than Dame.*) Don't ask I, don't ask I ony thing about it.

Dame. Well, I won't, I won't. (*Aside.*) Ifackins! I must know all about it though.—But only tell I who is to be killed, Gaffer.

Farmer. (*If possible, more agitated still.*) Killed! whoa talked o' killing! Killing be murder, and murder be ——. Dom thee, hold thy tongue, missis; hold thy dom tongue, wool 'ee? My hrean do turn round just for all the world like the sails o' yon windmill.

Dame. Be a bit cool, Gaffer; be a bit cool.

Farmer. (*Recovering himself.*) Look 'ee, deame, if I

* Mr. M —— is often praised for the *serious* interest he contrives to throw into his *comedies*; and the praise bestowed on him is not unmerited; for most of his *comedies* are as *serious* as rape, robbery, and murder, can make them. Folly, in all its varieties, the lesser vices, and the comic side of the greater ones, alone employed the pens of our elder writers of comedy; but the Modern Thalia, with laudable industry, takes cognizance also of high crimes and misdemeanours. The snivelling hussey has had the address to steal her sister's bowl and dagger; and seldom appears in public without a pocket-handkerchief at her nose. For my own part, I like to cry at a comedy; so not in the way of complaint do I notice this.

were to do zoa——I should never be able to do zoa. (*Striking his bosom.*)*

Dame. No more thee would, Gaffer; no more thee would. Never care what my lidd'n do say. Come, gi' thy old deame a buss.

Farmer. First o' all, deame, can thee do zoa? (*Striking his bosom.*)

Dame. (*Hesitating.*) Noa—yea—I——

Farmer. O, deame, deame!

Dame. (*Collecting herself.*) Yea, Gaffer, that we be poor——I can do zoa. (*Striking her bosom.*)

Farmer. Then thee beest my old deame after all. (*They rush into each other's arms.*)

Dame. But here do come my lord.

Farmer. (*More agitated than ever.*) Do he? do he! But why do I tremble zoa? I ha' gotten a clear conscience yet o' while. O, deame, deame! the clearest pond in my lord's garden be thick and muddy to a clear conscience; and the straightest hop-pole in the whole county be not half so upright as an upright heart. (*He removes the stick and discovers a secret door through which they pass.*)

Enter Lord Bluebevil. *His countenance*

* Three gentle taps: not like the pert rat-tat-tat of on a Sunday, but the signal of a lover at his mistress's of passing call to know whether conscience is at home. test of virtue is very liberally employed in all our never fails of exciting applause.

and haggard; he has one hand in his bosom, the other in his breeches-pocket.

Lord B. Yes, it is decided. The hated thing that breaks my rest, and interrupts my feverish and agitated slumbers, must be —— destroyed. If still this obstinate and headstrong loon refuse to perpetrate the deed, again the hand of Bluedevil, that hand already saturated with the crimson stream of life, must be dipped and stained, nay, plunged and empurpled in gore. But no: Wheatsheaf must be the agent of my vengeance. On earth he is my tenant and my slave; in hell—ha! save me from the thought—in hell he 'll be my equal! No matter; reflection comes too late; my hand, already heavy with the weight of blood, can rise with murderous and fatal aim no more. What, ho! within there!*

Enter WHEATSHEAF.

Farmer. Be it your honour's lordship do please to call?

Lord B. (*Signs to farmer to approach.*) Nearer, still nearer, I say; what fear'st thou?

Farmer. Fear, my lord? Saving your lordship's presence, I ha' nothing to be afeard on. A man—is a man; and zoa long as he can do zoa (*striking his bosom*)—he needn't fear ony body, I do take it.

* This speech is very *strongly written.*

Lord B. (*Groans deeply.**) Ah! he cuts [illegible] the soul! No more of this. Listen to me, farmer. Thou know'st this world contains one living [illegible] hateful to my sight. (*Mysteriously.*) Thou [illegible] the rest, too.†

Farmer. (*Looking cautiously about.*) My [illegible]

Lord B. Listen, and reply not. Ere [illegible] canopied by the shades of night—(*More mysteriously.*) Thou understand'st me.

Farmer. (*Trembling, and grasping his [illegible]*) My lord——

Lord B. Silence. Hast thou decided?

Farmer. (*Irresolutely.*) My lord——

Lord B. Peace! (*Draws his hand from his [illegible] pocket, and gives the farmer a piece of money.*) [illegible] the reward of thy obedience.

Farmer. (*Looking at the money.*) My lord——

Lord B. Enough. (*Draws his other hand from his bosom, and delivers to the former a knife.*) This [illegible] instrument which must rid me of my torm[illegible]

Farmer. I do tremble zoa, and the [illegible] stick in my throat for all the world like [illegible] a rake in a gravelly zoil.

Lord B. Quickly decide.

Farmer. (*Attempts to strike his bosom, but*) [illegible] can't do zoa.

* Peculiarity of the MODERN THALIA.

† Similar scenes of confidence between lords and [illegible] common in modern plays.

Lord B. No more of this trifling.

Farmer. (*Throws down the money.*) Dom thee, lie there. (*Strikes his bosom gently.*) I can do zoa a little better now. (*Throws down the knife.*) Dom thee, lie there, too. (*Strikes his bosom violently.*) My lord I ha' decided: I can do zoa as well as ever.

Lord B. What means all this?

Farmer. I'll tell 'ee what it do mean: Thee beest a lord—but can thee do zoa? (*Striking his bosom.*)

Lord B. I understand; thou refusest me! Then await my vengeance.

Farmer. Vengeance! I tell 'ee what: saving your lordship's presence, thof I be poor the sun do shine over my head; when I do sow the seed on my ground, the corn do grow; and if the ears do be full, and the crop do be good, I do get as much an acre for my harvest as your lordship's honour do for yours.

Lord B. He plants a dagger in my heart. (*Groaning piteously.*)*

Farmer. (*Taking Lord Bluedevil kindly by the hand.*) And I tell 'ee what: when I do lay down my head at night, I can do zoa (*striking his bosom*); and thof you be a lord, if you did but know the pleasure of doing zoa——But be a man, my lord—here be somebody coming—here, take a good book to comfort you. (*Gives him the Pilgrim's Progress.*)

* More Comedy!!

Enter DAME [illegible],

Farmer. Dom thee, what dost thee want here?

Dame. Ifackins! what dost thee want here? why here be my Lady Rosevalley, and my Lord Bluetown, and Squire Chevychace, and a mort o' the folks, coming up to the farm.

Farmer. Then let 'em come and welcome, [illegible]; for thof we be poor, we be honest.

Lord B. (Sinks into a chair, and rests his head on the table.) Oh! for a cordial to cheer my fainting heart.

Dame. We ha' gotten no cordials, but ye be heartily welcome to a draught of good [illegible] and yeale.

Farmer. Hold thy dom fool's tongue, [illegible] missus?

Enter LADY ROSEVALLEY, LORD [illegible], SQUIRE CHEVYCHACE, *and several* [illegible] *Gentlemen.*

Lady R. I declare I never was so fatigued in my life. One would imagine people never [illegible] these wild regions; for there appears to be no preparation for such an event. *(Looking about, but not perceiving Lord Bluedevil.)*

*All.** (*Laugh.*) Ha! ha! ha!

Lord Dash. Damme, you are right, [illegible] damn'd right. Give me Bond-street for a [illegible]

* The audience is not necessarily included in this [illegible]

airing, and leave country rambles to country clodpoles. Eh, farmer? (*Tapping farmer on the shoulder.*)

Lady R. Vastly well, indeed. (*Laughs.*) Ha! ha! ha!

All. (*Laugh.*) Ha! ha! ha!

Farmer. I don't rightly understand what you mean by clodpole, my lord; but look 'ee, my lord (*striking his bosom*); can you do zoa?

Lord Dash. Yes, farmer; and, damme, though I 'm a man of fashion, damme, I 'm not without a heart, damme.

Squire Chevy. Yoicks, tally-ho! broke cover! turned up old Bluedevil here.

Lady R. Merciful powers! he seems grief-worn and exhausted: give him air. (*They all crowd about him.*)

Farmer. (*Taking Lady Rosevalley aside.*) And well he may be. O miss,—my lady, I should say; if I thought you were as good as you 're pratty—but stop—can you do zoa? (*Striking his bosom.*)

Lady R. O farmer, I can, indeed; indeed, I can.

Dame. (*Aside.*) Mercy on me! I hope she 's not going to fall in love with my Gaffer: 't wouldn't be the first time a fine young lady has fallen in love with a farmer at first sight.*

Farmer. Can you? then I 'll tell 'ee (*Mysteriously*). You must know that my lord——

Lord B. (*Rushing wildly forward.*) Spare me, spare me the dreadful trial. Fiends—torments—furies—

* As in *A Cure for the Heart Ache.*

serpents hissing and whizzing in my ears—darkness—the shades of night—the gloom of despair.—Be silent as the grave, I charge thee!—no,—I charge thee, speak!—Blazon the horrible design—let it be shouted and gazetted to the execrating world.* I would have instigated him to——ha!——

Farmer. To murder!

All. Murder! whom?

Farmer. (*Dashing a tear from one eye, and looking compassionately with the other.*) A poor old cock, that has crowed afore his gate five years come Michaelmas. But I hadn't the heart to do it.

Lord B. Support me. Farmer, thine master shall not die. O, farmer, thou hast given peace to my heart, and quiet to my conscience. Thou hast taught me that where vice exists, there virtue cannot be; and that a virtuous tenant is happier than a guilty landlord.

Farmer. But, my lord——(*pointing to his head*) you understand me?

Lord B. Yes, farmer; and I may say, without boast, that I also (*striking his bosom*)

Farmer. (*Coming forward.*) And yet, [illegible] as shouldn't zay it, unless our kind [illegible] the sun-shine of their smiles, to ripen [illegible] we cannot hope—to do zea.

(*All the characters strike their bosoms, and [illegible] falls.*)

* More strong writing [illegible]

No. II.

A SCENE FROM BRITAIN'S GLORY,

A Loyal Comic Opera, in Three Acts, by T —— D——, Esq.

Dramatis Personæ.

ADMIRAL ANCHOR.*
SIR FREDERICK FRIBBLE.
TOM TOPSAIL.
CORPORAL CARTRIDGE.
LUCY LOVELY.

Scene.—A room at Admiral Anchor's. TOM TOPSAIL *and* CORPORAL CARTRIDGE *discovered at a table drinking: one singing "Rule Britannia," the other, "God save the King." The* CORPORAL *has but one eye, one leg, and one arm:* TOM TOPSAIL *has only one eye, and neither legs nor arms.*

Tom. Fill again, my boy, fill again:† our old master, Admiral Anchor, whose niece died in her

* The alliteration throughout is remarkably pretty. Mr. D—— has done much in this way, but has never succeeded better than in the present instance.

† The student in dramatic literature (for whose improvement these selections are especially intended) cannot too frequently peruse this

infancy,* finds us in drink; and the least we can do is to find our own *toast* † to it. 'Tis my turn to give one now.

Corp. And suppose you tack a sentiment to it,—'t will all go in our day's work.

Tom. Well thought on, old boy; I 'll give you—"Old England, and may she always be victorious by land and by sea!"

Corp. Huzza!

Together. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

Corp. And she always is victorious. ‡

scene. Mr. D———'s dialogues between crippled corporals, and able and disabled seamen, have been justly praised for their truth of imitation. What, indeed, can be more natural than this scene? I have sometimes listened to similar colloquies at the *Theatres Royal*, and so perfect has been the allusion, that I have fancied myself sitting in a Wapping pot-house.

* To those who are not well versed in the modern drama, this allusion to the Admiral's niece, who died in her infancy, may appear unnecessary here, as an allusion to his great-grandmother, who died before he was born. It is, however, a very ingenious hint, and introduced with considerable art. To a practised spectator it says as plainly as words can speak—"This niece, who died in her infancy, in excellent health and condition; as her appearance at sea, when you least expect it, will convince you."

† As the author of Virtue's Harvest Home has given his character; so the author of Britain's Glory has enriched the duration, and other turns of *words*, in the place of turns of *wit*, the dull expedient used by Congreve, Sheridan, and others, for the purpose of eking out their dialogue. It is said, the longer the joke is, the better: better than Mr. D———'s cannot be.

‡ This is a *joke* that never fails to entrap the audience into the bestowal of three good rounds of applause.

Tom. Tom Topsail has done *his* duty; so now for something from old Corporal Cartridge. And I say, —hand us over something as new as a seventy-four on the stocks.

Corp. Something new? Well, let me see: I'll give you—"The King, and all the Royal Family!"*

Tom. God bless 'em. That's a toast will never be the worse for wear.—Huzza!

Together. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

Corp. But I say, Master Boatswain, there 's ba news in your line to-day.

Tom. Bad news? What, I suppose we 've taken only twenty of the enemy's ships at a haul?

Corp. I wish it was no worse. Eleven French men of war have taken an English cutter.

Tom. Avast there, Master Corporal; an English cutter has taken eleven French men of war, you mean. †.

Corp. I tell you, 'tis as I say.

though, on these occasions (and they are lavished with an unsparing hand in Mr. D———'s operas, &c.), whether we brave Britons are applauding the author or ourselves.

* Cram a child with pastry and sweetmeats till you make him ill, and he will never after put himself in the way of a whipping by stealing tarts. The immoderate quantity of loyalty nightly administered to the public during several seasons, by this author, may have served to ———. I say, that children love tarts till you force them down their throats, and then they would rather eat potatoes.

† Englishmen conduct themselves well whenever called into action, and sometimes, indeed, perform prodigies of valour; but they no where perform such prodigies as in Mr. D———'s pieces.

Tom. Then I tell you, it is a lie, you old thick-head.*

Corp. I read it in the Gazette.

Tom. Damn the Gazette!—No; I won't damn the Gazette, for it bears the king's arms; and whatever bears the king's arms——But I see how it is, one of your glims is doused, and you can't read plain with the other.

Corp. I tell you I read it—'twas as plain as a general order. Besides, where's the great mischief of it?

Tom. Mischief! A loyal subject ask where's the mischief of it! Eleven French ships take an English cutter! Why, the thing's as impossible as to steer without compass or rudder. Pooh! you be damn'd to you. And to tell such a rigmarole to an old sailor who has fought for his king and country. Cartridge, you're a damn'd hard-hearted old

Corp. That's unkind; and I'd rather musket than drink another drop with you.

Tom. You have brought the salt wat eye of an old seaman. *(Wiping his eye.)*†

* This expression is perfectly in keeping with would be absurd to cavil at it as being coarse not *petits-maîtres*, so 'tis well 'tis' no worse.

† This scene is eminently pathetic. In such abound. His Jack Tars, when they are not mentalising or crying.

‡ There is a kind of imitation which pos nality. This is of that class. Mr. M

Corp. Ditto, I'm sorry for that. *(Wiping his eye.)*

Tom. Are you though? Well, a British sailor can forgive a friend, as well as beat a foe; and there's nothing so bright as the tear of an old soldier who has bled for his king——

Corp. Except the tear of a British tar who has bled for his country.

Tom. And to show that a British tar doesn't bear malice, I'll give you—"Chelsea for ever!"

Together. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

Corp. And to show that a British soldier can forget and forgive, I'll give you—"Greenwich for ever!"

Together. Huzza! huzza! huzza!

(They come forward.)

Corp. You've seen some service, old boy, and so have I. What a glorious thing is a battle! †

striking their bosoms: Mr. D———'s sailors are perpetually wiping their eyes. A true-born British tar, in the course of one of these three-act comic operas, will shed you "salt-water" sufficient to float his own vessel.

And to show (he might add) that a British tar will guzzle, and has good reasons for guzzling, so long as any one will find him drink.

† Whenever a British tar appears in a comic opera, a description of a battle is inevitable. It need not be made necessary to the progress of the action, nor need it be drawn in naturally by the current of the dialogue; but, as in the present instance, and, as it usually is, it may be dragged in, neck and shoulders, whenever the author thinks proper. As, however, it is always *effective*—that is to say, certain of being ap-

Tom. The enemy's fleet bearing down—

Corp. The enemy's troops marching up—

Tom. Pour in a broadside—

Corp. Charge bayonets—

Tom. Grape and canister—

Corp. Bombs and bullets—

Tom. With five sail of the line we attack forty of the enemy—

Corp. Two thousand English fall on seventy thousand French—

Tom. Take ten; burn, sink, and destroy twenty; thirty scud away—

Corp. Kill thirty thousand; make fifty thousand prisoners; fifty thousand fly—*

Together. Victory! Huzza! Huzza!

Tom. That was when you lost your eye, Corporal!

Corp. No: My eye I lost with the great Marlborough at Blenheim; my leg I gloriously lost at Waterloo; and my arm I lost fighting by the side of

plauded by the galleries—an experienced writer will know actor's discretion to introduce it as soon as he perceives boxes beginning to yawn, or at any period when by tions of a coming storm on the other side of the cantons, a battle and "British valour" always sense out of the field.

* Our heroes are killing, burning, sinking, ships and soldiers than were engaged in the would be absurd to attempt to circumscribe, with of arithmetic, courage and loyalty so enthusiastic

the brave Harry, at Agincourt.* And how came you crippled, Tom?—Come, tell us all about it.

Tom. No, split my timbers if I do. A British tar can beat forty Frenchmen at any time; but, dam'me, he won't boast. Howsomever, I'll tell you.

SONG. *Tom Topsail.*

My name's Tom Topsail: I have seen
Some *service*, doubt no *one* can,†
For nine times round the world I've been
With Rodney, Drake, and Duncan.
Brave Jarvis made me cabin-boy,
Believe me 'tis no story;
The Boatswain pip'd all hands ahoy!
And all for Britain's glory.

Old England pip'd her sons to arms,
Tom Topsail he obey'd her;
And, joining Drake, in war's alarms,
We beat the bold Armada.
I lost a leg: and next I sail'd
With Nelson, fam'd in story;
We beat the foe, and never fail'd;
And all for Britain's glory.

* Unless we are to consider this as a downright anachronism (and our comic operas now and then furnish examples of the use of this license), the Corporal is a veteran in the fullest sense of the term. On a moderate computation he must be upwards of four hundred years old.

† Assuredly not. He helped to beat the Armada in 1588, and fought with Nelson full two centuries later. But, compared with his companion, Tom is a mere infant in the career of arms; for, as yet

Although I had an odd knee,
And oft the Mounseer's flag I beat,
Along with gallant Rodney,
With him I lost a leg and eye;
Said I, "I don't despond,
Because a British tar will die,
And all for Britain's Glory."

Then next with Howe, in storms and calms,
I oft the foe did lather:
A chain-shot took off both my arms
And t'other leg together.*
But soon the doctor set me right,
As now I stand before ye;
My heart is whole, and still I'll fight,
And all for Britain's glory.

Then, since I've not lost both my glims,
Kind Fate has spared an odd eye;
And though I've lost my precious limbs,
What then?—I've got my body.†

he can hardly be more than two centuries and a half [illegible] already been observed, that anachronisms, [illegible] allowable in comic operas; but if Mr. Topsail should [illegible] with Drake, "it follows as the night the day," that [illegible] promoted him to the post of cabin-boy when he was [illegible] hundred and twenty years of age. After this, [illegible] complaints of the tardiness of naval promotion.

* A very ingenious operation of this chain-shot [illegible] best stands Mr. Tom's account. He lost a leg with [illegible] leg with Rodney, and "t'other leg" with Howe. [illegible] the third leg he has lost! But what does that signify [illegible] British tar? Besides, one can never suffer too much [illegible] one's king and country.

† And a very ample salvage too, for a tar of such [illegible]

And, should I lose my body too,
My head shall tell this story,—
"'Tis thus a British tar should do,
And all for Britain's glory."

Enter ADMIRAL ANCHOR.

Admiral. Softly there, softly; keep less noise between decks.

Tom. We are drinking to the success of old England, my noble Commander.

Admiral. Then make less noise about it, and be damn'd to you.

Tom. Less noise! It wasn't your word of command to make less noise when the cannons were roaring aboard the 'Thunderer.'*

Admiral. We are not aboard the 'Thunderer' now, you lubber.

Tom. No; for aboard the 'Thunderer' Tom Topsail was fighting alongside of you. But Tom's hulk

and loyalty. But after his boast of what his head should do, even should he lose his body, it is to be hoped we shall hear no more of Witherington, of Chevy-chase celebrity. Tom, however, is a mere pigmy, compared with some others of Mr. D———'s heroes.

I will take this occasion to mention as a general rule, that when a British audience is to be drugged with clap-trap loyalty, and boasts of British valour, British generosity, or British anything else, the dose cannot be too strongly administered.

* A foremast-man abusing his admiral, forms a true picture of naval manners; at least it passes for such on the stage. It is now, perhaps, a little the worse for use.

is batter'd, and I suppose he's to be put out of commission.

Corp. Aye, Gratitude has shoulder'd arms, and march'd out of the garrison.

Admiral. Split my timbers! a mutiny in the fleet!

Tom. Mutiny! Look'ee, Admiral, I've shed my blood for you; but run me up the yard-arm, if ever I thought to shed a tear.* *(Wiping his eye.)*

Corp. Nor I neither, spike me on a *shiver-de-frese* if I did. *(Wiping his eye.)*

Admiral. What the devil are *you* piping at? Who spoke to you?

Corp. True; but look'ee, your honour; when a British sailor pipes his eye, it is the duty of every British soldier to pipe his eye also.

Admiral. (Wiping his eyes.) Dam'me, my old weather-beaten timbers a'nt proof against this. *(Kindly.)* Boatswain.

Tom. (Sulkily.) What says my noble Commander?

Admiral. Corporal.

Corporal. (As sulkily as Tom.) Your honour.

Admiral. I've wrong'd you; and a British officer is not too proud to own it. Come, fill your glasses, lads. Here's "Gratitude! and may the man that is without gratitude never sail in his right element."

Tom. } Long life to your honour!
Corp. }

* More naval pathetic.

Admiral. Ah! lads, and I might still be happy, if my poor niece ——

Tom. Ay, Miss Lovely, who died in her infancy. But come, your honour mustn't think of that.

(*A scream heard.*)

Admiral. (*Agitated.*) Tom! that scream!

Tom. 'T was very like!* Should it be? But make all said for the port a-head, and leave me plenty of sea-room.

(ADMIRAL *retires into a room at the side*—CORPORAL *walks up the stage.*)

Enter LUCY LOVELY (*running*), *followed by* SIR FREDERICK FRIBBLE.

Lucy. Save me! save me!

Sir F. Why do you fly me my charmer? I have four spanking greys, that shall gaily gallop us to Gretna-green. Let me be your *beau;* the blacksmith shall fasten the matrimonial *knot;* and I shall come back to London with an additional—*rib-on.*

Lucy. Leave me, monster, nor longer persecute me.

Sir F. Well, my frisky filly, if you 've the folly not to follow freely, Frederick Fribble would feel it foolish not to force you.† So here goes. (*Takes her arm.*)

* Like the scream of the Admiral's niece who died in her infancy. The modern drama abounds in recognitions equally probable.

† Alliteration is the beauty by which (next to pun) Mr. D———'s

Tom. Avast there, pirate! haul down your colours, or I'll sink the cutter, and I'll pour a broadside into your poor [illegible]

Garp. Leave him to me, you [illegible] have neither legs nor arms?

Tom. The duty of a British sailor.

Sir F. Stand out of the way, you great sea bear. Do you know who I am?

Tom. No; but I know that a female is a woman, and it is the duty of a British tar to protect a woman in distress.* So, surrender your prize, and make all sail out of an enemy's port. If you can't you'll buy a rabbit.

Sir F. Then I'll go and buy a brush. This is above my *pitch*. (*Exit.*)

Lucy. Pr'ythee don't run after him.

Tom. (*pointing to his wooden legs.*) A British sailor scorns to run.†

Lucy. Thanks, my brave deliverer. During this intrusion. Alighting from the Plymouth [illegible] the monster accosted me (ADMIRAL *appears behind*); he would have forced me to accompany him; I fled; he followed; perceiving this door [illegible]

style is distinguished. In the art of pursuing [illegible] and (I am forced to admit) dangerous rivals, [illegible] he reigns alone.

* This sentiment is sufficient to save a [illegible] damnation. *Probatum est.*

† Ditto.

entered to avoid him: you know the rest. But, where am I?

Tom. Aboard the good ship 'Admiral Anchor.'

Lucy. Good Heavens! my uncle! Extraordinary adventure!*

ADMIRAL (*rushing forward*).

Admiral. Yes, Lucy, your uncle, who has so long mourned your death. Image of your departed mother! (*They embrace.*) But more of this anon.

Tom. Never a more unlooked-for ship than this came into harbour; and come what may of it—— 'tis all for BRITAIN'S GLORY.

* Perfectly natural and probable; and, in the modern drama, nothing more common.

END OF THE SCENE.

No. III.

BEAUTIES OF THE MODERN DRAMA.

SCENES FROM LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE.

(By Sir L—— S——.)

From sentimental clod-poles and sentimental [illegible] tars, I now lead the dramatic student to the [illegible] templation of the softer and less palpable beauties of the gentle Sir L—— S——.

Sir L——'s Pegasus is not that unruly horse that would set rivers flowing out of rocks by a blow of its hoof. I'll warrant him to amble across the breakfast-table in the *boudoir* of a St. James's [illegible] and never crack the tea-pot. He is the quietest steed in the whole dramatic stud; and if Tattersall had the selling of him, he would, undoubtedly, [illegible] might truly say in his recommendation, "He is so tame that a lady might ride him."

The scenes now to be taken in review [illegible] mens of the genteelest, most inoffensive

comedy since the days of the insipid Hugh Kelly.* Thalia, instead of a merry, laughing, romping, mischievous nymph, is here a well behaved, mincing, simpering young lady. She possesses not the blood and muscle of the Muse of Congreve and Sheridan. She is a thorough boarding-school miss, and would

* Attached to the manuscript of LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE are a few notes and memorandums in the author's hand-writing. From these it appears that the piece was presented, a few years ago, to the Theatre Royal, C——— G———, under the title of NARCISSUS AND AMARILLA, and in the form of a *Romantic Drama*, in *Three* Acts. Being rather deficient in plot, incident, situation, character and dialogue, and its success, as a Romantic Drama, doubtful, the author was recommended to cut it down into a two-act farce. Having proceeded on this recommendation, he then presented it as *Who's for the Opera!* a *Farce* in *Two* Acts. Being now found wanting in the liveliness, spirit, and bustle, necessary to the success of that species of composition, it was rejected, first, by the before-mentioned house, as "unlikely to assist the interests of that Theatre;" next by the H——— M——— as "not promising any beneficial result to that concern;" and, lastly, by D^e——— L——— as "not appearing to the judgment of the lessee of that *National* establishment, to promise sufficient opportunities for the display of the talents of his company." An *intelligent friend* next advised the re-extension of the work into a *three-act Opera*. In less than a year this change was effected; and, as the MARRIAGE IN HIGH-LIFE, a *Comic Opera* in *Three Acts*, it was again rejected by all the Theatres above named; and, also, by the manager of the E——— O——— as "not likely to succeed on his boards, and he being capable of writing almost as good an Opera himself." The author now did what he ought to have done in the first instance: he obeyed the dictates of his own genius; and instead of reducing his *three*-act Opera into a *one*-act Interlude (as another intelligent friend counselled him to do) he boldly stretched it out into a *five*-act Comedy; and it is to that resolution we are indebted for the unrivalled work before us.

do credit to the best established [illegible]. She never speaks one word higher than [illegible] utters an unkind or a severe expression, nor indulges in satire or invective, nor ill-naturedly exposes other people's vices and follies; but bows and courtesies, and is polite to all the world, as a well-bred young lady ought to be. She holds up her mirror to the *human nature* of the Opera and the evening "At Home," and meditates among the smoke-dried shrubs of Grosvenor-square; and the results of her observations and reflections are such faithful transcripts of that most interesting of all the modifications of life, called *fashionable life*, as are exhibited in the following scenes from

LA BELLE ASSEMBLÉE.

A genteel Comedy in Five Acts, by Sir L—— S——.

Dramatis Personæ.

The Duke of Daffodil.*
The Marquis of Bloomfair.
The Earl of Sweetberry.
Lord Narcissus Hyacinth.
Lord Everbloom Daisymore.
Colonel Fitzmyrtle.
Jessamy, the Earl of Sweetberry's Valet.
Countess of Sweetberry.
Lady Cecilia Roselily.
Lady Amarilla Roselily.
Lady Julia Tuberose.
Floretta, Lady Sweetberry's Lady's Maid.

Act I. Scene I.†—The Countess of Sweetberry's Boudoir tastefully decorated.

* Say what you will of Sir L——'s *dramatis personæ*, it must be allowed that they have always pretty names—sweetly pretty.

† By the notes already alluded to, it appears that the Author had been long undecided about which scene he should open his play with. Indeed it does not greatly matter, as they have no very intimate connection one with the other, nor is there such a continuity of in-

Enter JESSAMY *and* FLORETTA, *meeting; they bow and curtsey to each other.*

Floretta. Bless me, Jessamy, what brings you into my lady's boudoir?

Jessamy. Permit me to inquire what brings you here, Mrs. Floretta?*

Floretta. I come for my lady's reticule. (*She takes it from a toilette-table, which is covered with flowers and foreign essences.*)

Jessamy. And I for my lord's snuff-box. (*He takes it from a beautiful chiffoniere.*)

Floretta. I imagine that Colonel Fitzmarsh will not lead Lady Amarilla Roselily to the hymeneal altar.

Jessamy. Really, Floretta, I cannot say; nor should I think it proper to interfere in the affairs of the family. But, did not the Colonel secretly charge you with a letter to Lady Amarilla?

Floretta. The Colonel is too much of a gentleman to do any thing so improper; and, had he attempted it, I would not have assisted him in such a [illegible] tine proceeding,

terest in the piece, as to render the transposition of the [illegible] or even the omission of an act or two, of any consequence. [illegible] his decision to open the piece in the way he has done is [illegible] only because the scene, where it is, can do neither [illegible] but, for the more important reason, that a beginning [illegible] other, is absolutely necessary.

* This is *genteel* Comedy indeed! Jessamy, [illegible] *beau ideal* of servants. This it is to live in fashionable [illegible]

Jessamy. Pardon the question, Floretta; and to convince me that you forgive me the suspicion, deign to allow me to press my lips to your cheek.

Floretta. (*Blushing deeply.*)* That is a liberty I never permit; but you may take my hand, Jessamy.

Jessamy. (*Pressing her hand respectfully to his lips.*) *Au revoir*, Floretta.

Floretta. *Votre serviteur*, Jessamy.

[*Exeunt severally. He bowing, she curtseying.*

Scene II.—The Earl of Sweetberry's Library, elegantly fitted up.

Enter LORD SWEETBERRY *and* COLONEL FITZMYRTLE.

Lord Sweet. It is with infinite regret, my dear Colonel, I repeat that I cannot listen to your proposals.†

Colonel. Yet allow me, my dear lord, the pleasure of once more recapitulating them. I do not presume to offer myself a candidate for the fair hand of your lordship's elder daughter, the elegant and accomplished Lady Cecilia Roselily; but I hope you do not consider me as unworthy the honour of leading

are better bred than the lords and ladies in certain plays I could name. It will presently be seen that their discretion (a rare quality among servants) is quite equal to their breeding.

* How is the actress to accomplish this? Never mind: they'll arrange that at rehearsal.

† This scene possesses no particular interest, nor are the characters introduced by it very distinctly marked, or distinguished one from the other; but both his Lordship and the Colonel are eminently polite and well-behaved, and the scene, upon the whole, is *genteel*.

to the hymeneal altar [illegible]
the lovely and amiable Lady Amarilla.

Lord Sweet. Who waits?

Enter a Servant in a splendid Livery.

Lord Sweet. Chairs, (*Servant places chairs, and exit.*) Pray be seated, Colonel. (*They sit.*) I should consider your alliance with my family an honour, my dear Fitzmyrtle; but you know——

Colonel. My fortune, I own, is not large; but I am of an ancient family, my rank in the army [illegible] despicable, and I have expectations of a baronetcy——

Lord Sweet. By the possibility of succeeding your uncle Sir Egerton Gayblossom; but Sir Egerton has a son, and your elder brother——

Colonel. Is now with his regiment; my cousin, Mortimer Gayblossom, is about to join him; they may both unfortunately fall bravely in battle, and then——

Lord Sweet. Your suit would still be unavailing, I have promised the hand you sigh for to Lord [illegible] Hyacinth. (*They rise.*)

Colonel. Then pardon, my dear lord; a [illegible] is sacred, and to press the conversation further would be impolite. I will instantly order my [illegible] my portmanteau; I will set off for Paris, [illegible] gay vortex of pleasure, endeavour to banish [illegible] collection of the lovely lady Amarilla for [illegible]

Lord Sweet. I approve of your [illegible] But come; will you return to the [illegible]

the gentlemen are still engaged over Champagne and pine-apples,* or emigrate to the drawing-room and discoffee with the ladies?

Colonel. I fly to the drawing-room, my lord; but call it not *emigration*, for wherever the ladies are, there is my native home.

Lord Sweet. Elegantly said, Colonel. I grieve that I cannot call you son-in-law,—for—shall I confess it?—you are a charming man. After you, Colonel. (*Bowing.*)

Colonel. Pardon me, my lord. (*Bowing.*)

Lord Sweet. I cannot think of preceding you. (*Bowing.*)

Colonel. Your lordship does me too much honour. (*Exeunt, bowing.*)

Scene III.—The drawing-room at Lord Sweetberry's, most superbly furnished, and elegantly ornamented. In various parts are vases and tripods bearing flowers. On one side a grand piano, by Broadwood; on the other, a most beautiful harp, by

* This allusion is skilfully introduced. The tone of the dialogue sufficiently guarantees the fidelity of the author's representations of fashionable life; but a wary dramatist has more than one string to his bow. Sir L—— —— gives a "boudoir tastefully decorated," "beautiful chiffoniers," a "library elegantly fitted up;" and, as if this were not enough to convince us that we are breathing the air of Park-lane or Grosvenor-square, he marches up with a reinforcement of Champagne and pine-apples. He is not the man to spoil a ship (the figure I use will, I fear, cut but a sorry *figure* beside the genteel phrases of *La Belle Assemblée*) for want of a ha'p'orth of tar,

Board. Scattered about on different [illegible] mental furniture are Chinese [illegible] rondos, Ackermann's fashions, and the [illegible] Beauty," bound in rose-coloured satin.

At the back of the Scene the Countess of Sweet-berry, *the* Marquis of Bloomville, Lady Tuberose *and the* Duke of Darkmore *engaged at five-guinea whist. Other card-tables occupied by beauty and fashion.* Lady [illegible], Lord Narcissus Hyacinth, Lady [illegible] Lord Everbloom Daisymore, [illegible]

Countess of Sweet. Well, my dear [illegible] do you never mean to play again?

Marquis. Bless me!—Eh!—Pardon, my [illegible], I was *distrait.* What are trumps?

Lady Julia. Diamonds, I believe.

Duke. Spades, I think.

Countess. No,—Clubs—eh?*

Lord Narcissus. May I speak?—[illegible] Julia dealt.

Lady Julia. So I did. Positively I forgot.

Lord Narcissus. Can Lady Julia forget?—

* This is, indeed, a masterly touch. Making a whist forget the trump colour is an admirable [illegible] The absence of mind, whether real or affected, [illegible] indelibly the impress of *fashion* on the players. [illegible] who play for sixpences, though they often succeed [illegible] aping their betters, must not hope to rival them [illegible]

† Sir L——'s wit is not of that kind which [illegible] blow. It does not resemble the hearty, [illegible]

All (*exclaiming together.*) Sweet! pretty! delicate! Did you hear what Lord Narcissus said?

Marquis. The game, the game; you forget we are at whist.

(LORD NARCISSUS *and* LADY AMARILLA *coming forward.*)

Lord Narcissus. Indeed, Lady Amarilla, I am not surprised at the Colonel's having lost his heart to you; for who could behold so much loveliness and not love?

Lady Amarilla. (*Tapping him on the arm with an Indian fan.*) Be quiet, you fascinating creature, do.

Lord Narcissus. But have you thought of naming the happy day? Must I long languish?

Lady Amarilla. How can you be so tormenting, Narcissus?

Lord Narcissus. (*Leading her opposite to a looking-glass, and pointing to her reflection in it.*) Can Lady Amarilla wonder?*

greve's, nor the small-sword thrust of Sheridan's; it neither makes you laugh, like Kenny's, nor does it make you cry, like ———'s. Indeed, I scarcely know how to characterise it otherwise than by negatives—it is difficult to define it—it is *sui generis*. Yet let me try what I can do with it. Its most striking characteristic is the quiet and subdued tone—but hold!—the thing is done to my hand. In the next speech it is described to a tittle. We there have the united opinion of *all* the characters that it is *sweet* and *pretty*. And so it is.

* All this is very elegant.

Lady Amarilla. (*Giving him her hand.*) I declare you are an irresistible [illegible]. [illegible]

Lord Narcissus. Charming creature! [illegible] so it is settled that Lord Everbloom [illegible] our elegant sister, Lady Cecilia, are [illegible]—*

Lady Amarilla. Why, between ourselves [illegible] but here they come.

(Lord Everbloom [illegible] Cecilia [join them.]) [illegible]

Lady Cecilia. I'm positive he knew [illegible] the affair on the *tapis*, because [illegible]

Lord Everbloom. I hope not; but [illegible] —— however, Lady Amarilla can best inform [illegible]

Lady Cecilia. Amarilla, do you know [illegible] obstinate creature will have it [illegible]

Lady Amarilla. Oh! about the Colonel? [illegible] tively I can't say, for "he never told his [illegible]

Lord Narcissus. Elegantly quoted! [illegible]

Lady Amarilla. But have you heard [illegible] Sweetberry's scheme for the Colonel? [illegible]

Lord Everbloom. No; pray let us have it.

Lady Amarilla. But, mum; for [illegible] Finding the Colonel rather —— but here [illegible]

(*Enter* Colonel Fitzmyrtle, [illegible]

Bless me, Colonel, I began to fear we [illegible]

* These breaks in the dialogue, where one of [illegible] begins a sentence which the other does not [illegible] purpose: they economise the Author's matter, or [illegible] one idea between two or more persons; and suspend [illegible] the *interest*.

† The *scheme* here on the point of exposition seems [illegible]

Colonel. (*Sighing.*) Ah! Lady Amarilla!

Lord Narcissus. You seem out of spirits, Fitzmyrtle.

Colonel. (*Aside.*) I must dissemble.—Never in better, believe me.

Lady Cecilia. Will you join our little satirical party, or adjourn to a card-table?

Colonel. The party of Lady Cecilia must ever be mine. (*Bowing.*)

Lady Cecilia. (*Curtseying.*) You overpower me, Fitzmyrtle. (*To Lord Everbloom.*) Now, I declare he's a charming man.

Lord Everbloom. (*Evidently piqued.*) You think so?

Lady Cecilia. You're jealous! How ridiculous!*

Lady Amarilla. Now for a little scandal. Do you know it is whispered ——†

less than to induce the Colonel to quit the party, among whom is the object of his fruitless and unhappy passion, and court oblivion at the Opera. Indeed, so far as I can perceive, this forms the entire plot of the Comedy. It is not remarkable for interest, nor are the situations and incidents arising out of it either numerous or striking; but the *gentility* of the dialogue is a sufficient compensation for deficiency in other respects.

* (*Note of the Author's, attached to the MS.*) "This scene of jealousy all my own—best I ever wrote—perhaps too *strong* for genteel Comedy—query, cut it out? Theodore Hook swears it's finer than *Polly* and *Violante*, and he is not the man to quiz one. I myself think it is more refined; in better taste, and so forth."

† (*Another note by the Author.*) "Positively will omit all this

Lord Everbloom.

Lord Narcissus.

Lady Amarilla. A truce, a truce. cissus, there is no defence against shafts are too piercing.

Lord Narcissus. Were they piercing shot from those eyes——

Lady Amarilla. Be quiet; you say things.

Lord Everbloom. A truce, as Lady a truce to this contest of wit. To prevent we will fly to harmony. Lady us Lord Narcissus's new song.

Lady Amarilla. The song he wrote on ing to allow him to take charge of my fan?—Indeed, 't is charming.

Lord Narcissus. (*Bowing to her.*)

—too cutting and severe—might be said I'm coming scandal scene in what-'s-his-name's play of the —besides, anybody in general might think I meant ticular—rather lose my joke than my friend."

Spite of the Author's diffidence, I cannot resist the forming the reader that the weight of this exquisite on the tie of Captain S——'s neckcloth, and the cut boot. I congratulate them both on its suppression opinion that the Author was in any danger of comparison with the School for Scandal; nor do I to the maxim he alludes to, that it is better to one's friend. Much depends on their relative be a good one, and worth preserving; the friend,

Lady Amarilla. Well, we will each sing a verse: please my harp here.

Lord Narcissus. I am your servant. (*He brings the harp.*)

Lord Harrbloom. Delicate and elegant.

LADY AMARILLA *sings.*

O let me thy richly-wrought reticule carry,
To thee it belongs, then, to me it is dear:
Believe me, my lady, Sir Charles, or Lord Harry,
Will scarce breathe a sigh on the 'broider'd "*Souvenir.*"
But I, Lady A——, with soft rapture will press it,
Yet harm no *bijou* that may nestle within;
Though fervent my love, my respect shall repress it:
I'll *kiss*, but not *crush* it—for that were a sin!

All exclaim. Exquisite! divine!

LADY CECILIA *sings.*

The fan that on Sycamore's button now dangles,
Allow me, my lady, to hang upon mine.
He knows not its worth—I don't mean for its spangles—
But since 't is (as well as the reticule) thine.
Consign it to me, and I'll still hover near thee;
I'll watchfully lean on the back of thy chair,
And e'er as thou wantest a Zephyr to cheer thee,
The fan shall be ready to summon one there.

Lord Narcissus. Lady Cecilia, nothing can equal the charm of your voice——

Lord Everbloom. Except [illegible]
Amarilla is [illegible]
the music [illegible]
Colonel. Except the [illegible]
ing to Lord Narcissus.
Lord Narcissus. This from you [illegible]
generous man!* (*Bowing*
Colonel. (*Drawing Lord Narcissus*
cissus, I have something of the
communicate.
Lord Narcissus. (*Eyeing*
more with his glass.) Dull
digious deal too high. †
Colonel. I am going to Paris
Lord Narcissus.
Colonel. In that gay vortex of pl
deavour to banish the recollection of the
Amarilla for ever. ‡ My love
are to be the happy man—but you
cissus, for you are a charming creature
Lord Narcissus. Were merit
would be yours. Fitzmythe
fellow—now don't deny it—

* It must be remembered they are sitting
This trait is finely characteristic of
munication of the last importance.

‡ The colonel has said this once already;
be pardoned for the extreme prettiness of

§ These gentlemen's praises of each other

[illegible]

Lord Everbloom. And, fortunately, [illegible]

Lord Narcissus. Come, then, my lovely [illegible] (*to Amarilla*) [illegible] take?—May we ever tread on flowers [illegible]

Amarilla. Fascinating creature.

(*Exeunt all the characters except the colonel.*)

Colonel. I am lost in reverie.

Enter LORD SWEETBERRY.

Lord Sweetberry. The moment is propitious; the colonel is alone. (*Looking off.*) Everbloom with Cecilia — Narcissus bending over Amarilla! Sweet sweetness! my dearest hopes are gratified. — Colonel.

Colonel. (*Starting from his reverie.*) My lord — pardon.

Lord Sweetberry. (*Aside.*) I must open my pro-

sweet; and, considering they are rivals, there is something very touching in their acknowledgments of each other's merits.

sure. True, my Lord.

Colonel. No, my dear lord;

Lord Sweetberry. (*Looking*

Colonel. Suppose we go

Lord Sweetberry. (*Aside.*)

Colonel, I am yours.

Colonel. I 'll follow you, my lord.

berry bows, and exit.) And

Sure none can tell what pain it is to groan
The bitter pangs of crucified love;

END OF THE SCENE.

address this difficult and important scene

consistency of the characters are preserved

exactness. Sending Lord Sweetberry and

epistle a full hour after it is over is a

derful intimacy with the manners of

end of the *Scene* merely, though

[illegible] extended to the end of an Act, or even [illegible] so ingeniously is this play constructed, [illegible] by it would be neither augmented nor dimi[illegible] the scene before us (or indeed any other scene of it) [illegible] its beginning, its middle, or its ending. The plot, [illegible] commenced only must have dropped out in the course of the many changes the piece has undergone, backwards and forwards from drama to farce, and from opera to comedy. But this is of no sort of consequence; for it is one of the great advantages inherent in Gaunt's Grammar, that nothing is expected or required from it but decent, well-behaved dialogue; and this condition has been amply fulfilled by the Author of La Belle Assemblée.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

THE CRIMES

[illegible]

THE RIVER

A Melo-drama, in Two

[illegible]

"Walk in, ladies and gentlemen; the show [illegible]

That this evil wants a remedy is not [illegible] it be denied that the theatre is in a [illegible] reformation as matters of mere [illegible] of our national taste, I could wish [illegible] could not subsist, under decent [illegible] to present anything there but what [illegible] would be time enough to [illegible] it totally fall, or effectually support it.

Life of [illegible]

Truth may complain, and [illegible] may, the few will never be a [illegible] should think fit to interpose, and [illegible] these gin-shops of the stage, that [illegible] honour their understanding, with [illegible]

THE melo-drama is of modern [illegible] is France; it burst into being [illegible]

[redacted] the revival of the French [redacted] exhibiting situations to all except the right [redacted] sculpture, of the filthy, this noisy, ranting, [redacted] squalling, strutting, swaggering, vaporing style was forced to seek a home on one of the minor verges. The whole dramatic family is now, moreover, so numerous, and in so prosperous a way, within the French capital, no fewer than four theatres are devoted to its support. It speedily found its way into England; and there is scarcely a piece amongst the *Boulevards*, to the great astonishment and delight of the Paris *rabble*,† but has been presented at the LONDON MINATURE ROYAL—the PANDEMONIUM METROPOLITAN THEATRE—the LILLIPUTIAN VARIETIES—the GREAT NATIONAL THEATRE,

French hero of the *Théâtre Français*, the theatre justly distinguished as the NATIONAL THEATRE, because it is there the honour of the national drama is preserved inviolate. A Frenchman may, without blushing, lead a foreigner to its gates, and exclaim, "So much for the sanctuary of my great countryman" (as Thespis, in fact, taught in saying so);—"the sanctuary! pass and defile, of Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire! Here may you contemplate the living glories of our scene—a Talma and a Mars!" If I happen to find myself along with an intelligent foreigner in the neighbourhood of Drury-Lane, I shout away with him.—And what does Thalia in a niche outside Covent Garden Theatre, having nothing to do within? There she stands, poor melancholy wench! looking complaints to each passer by, of the hard usage she has received from her unnatural guardians.

† True of it when this was written (1822), whatever now may be the case.

which Shakspeare and Corneille ... where Garrick and Kemble ... Macready and O'Neill ... have been understood to be. ... of one of the most enlightened ... We have few, very few ... English stage; but French ... so essential a portion of the ... scale of the BEAUTIES OF ... be incomplete without a specimen ... nature. The piece to be ... and, we will venture to say, that ... reader, is partly original, and in part ... the French.* The characters, ... this melo-drama, as in all others, ... and victims, rightful lords and wrongful ... robbers, assassins, and females in ... dialogue, as usual, is composed ... defiance, remonstrance, and ... requisites being absolute, and ... *drama lire* denied the free choice of ... dialogue, it is evident, that he ... nality and superiority of his powers ... walk of the drama, only by the ...

* The phrase is used, as using ... than the word translated for them ... French, they are seldom put into English, but ... the two languages, in a sort of melo-dramatic ... one or the other—like Mahomet's coffin, ... ceiling.

[illegible] dangers, and extraordinary escapes [illegible] disguises, and surprising discoveries; [illegible] apparently insurmountable, suddenly [illegible] unexpectedly overcome; wreaths of [illegible] daggers, dances; dungeons in unfathom[illegible] caves, and castles on inaccessible eminences; &c. &c. &c. His work, therefore, must be tried, not by any ordinary canons of criticism, but simply by its power of maintaining the audience, or, properly speaking, the spectators, in a state of anxiety and watchfulness from the rising till the falling of the curtain. To effect this is a difficult task: for the melo-dramatic materials being always the same, it will sometimes happen that one melo-drama is exceedingly like many others; and it requires an uncommon and *kaleidoscopical* kind of genius to vary those same materials *ad infinitum*, and, by the same means, perpetually to produce new subjects of interest and surprise. This task will, however, be found to be accomplished in the following piece.

It has become a fashion to decry this species of entertainment as unworthy of holding a place in our great national theatres.—Why?—Is it because melo-dramas usurp that portion of the time, allowed for an evening's amusement, formerly allotted to farce, or the minor comedy? Or because they frequently occupy the place of comedy and tragedy too? Or because they present a jumble of incongruities, altogether revolting to good taste? Or because their

THE CRIMSON HERMITS;

OR,

THE RIVER ROCK.

Dramatis Personæ.

BARON GROSSENDORFF. The rightful Baron, disguised as PEREGRINO, a Wood-cutter.

BARON STRANGLEDORFF, the Usurper, disguised as SANGUINO, and as a Crimson Hermit.

POIGNARDO,
DAGGERDORFF,
PISTOLBERG,
BLOODMANDORFF,
CUT-THROATO,

} Banditti, disguised as Crimson Hermits.

PEREGRINO, faithful follower of the Baroness, afterwards disguised as a Minstrel and as a Robber: a coward who performs prodigies of valour.

THIRTY-FIVE BANDITTI, or usurping Knights, disguised as Crimson Hermits.

FORTY VILLAGERS, afterwards disguised as Minstrels.

Ladies of Fashion.

Scene I.—On one side, a
a dark Wood—at the
which at some distance
craggy and inaccessible.
woody Country, and in the
is seen the Castle of

VILLAGERS *discovered dancing round*
*rated with Garlands.—*FELLTHEAD
on one side of the Stage;
DAGGERDONEE, PISTOLBERG,
CUT-THROATO, *and several other*
crimson dresses, on the other.

Chorus of Villagers.

Let us dance, and let us sing,
Blithely round the May-

* This scene is minutely described ; its
enchanting. The scene-painter is always
of a melo-drame, and mainly contributes
times scenes are painted to *fit* melo-dramas
are made to *fit* scenery. When the wardrobe
stocked with the glittering finery of
issued to the several carpenters of the
of wood and words to *use them*.

† "Don't you be too sure, that he is a

While the youths and maidens bring
Flowers along our path to strew.*
Let us merry be and gay,
'Tis the village holiday.

CHORUS OF HERMITS. (only louder)

All impatient, now do we
Pant for crimson blood† and crime;
But we should discover'd be,
For it is not yet the time.‡
Thus let them merry be and gay,
'Tis the village holiday.

VILLAGERS AND HERMITS TOGETHER.

Come, then, youths and maidens, pray,
Here to join in frolic play;
Come, and merry be, and gay,
'Tis the village holiday.

Lubetta. If you wish me not to dance, I won't, dear father.

Felltreco. Thou art a dutiful child, and believe me ever thy affectionate father.§

(*Distant thunder—the dancing ceases.*)

* *Strew* is very bad English, but *strew* would be a bad rhyme. In this world, we cannot have everything our own way. For the rest, it may be said of these verses, that they are infinitely superior to any thing that has yet appeared in the way of melo-dramatic poetry. This epithet may, perhaps, be objected to as redundant: if blood were not sky-blue, the hermits would be justified in doubting the particular colour they "pant for." Perhaps, though, as they are not hermits, but peasants,—No matter what Figaro says, "Non disputons d'Opéra. Comiques (melo-dramas) n'y regardent pas de si près."

† This is an artful preparation; it is a hint that the time will come.

‡ This pathetic opening, as simple and natural as the confession of a letter, begets a strong moral interest in favour of both father and daughter.

storm is coming.

Second Villager.

first a blessing from the holy

Sanguino. Then kneel, my

Bremo's eye, and, at our call,

blessing, must receive. At

come, and mark me!

Felltreco. (*Taking*

my child.

Sanguino. (*Aside.*)

shall be useless.—Approach, my

(*Music expressive of*

Sanguino lays his left hand on the head

† This speech may sound rather

may seem somewhat cramp and crooked; but the style

gloss is pure and unadulterated melo-drama—chief of

like the poetry, or rather to say the truth, of the whole

Baron Munchausen says to his

the is a great judge of

take a voyage to the moon; I propose

Reed's melo-drama

neither of us is

jolting quiet. I

melo-dramas are

seriously prepared for this

of this the only

my other pen, please,

descriptive and expressive

claims made on its assistance.

[illegible] (*Sanguino and Fellitree approach the darkness.*) Ha! 'tis strange, dwell in solitary caves, [illegible] *The villagers appear to be struggling to disengage themselves from the hermits, who seem to be getting them from [illegible] the knife. Each hermit draws a dagger, concealed in his staff, and is about to* [illegible] *Music expressive of killing a villager.*

Sanguino. Damnation! we are observed! (*All the hermits quickly conceal their daggers. The villagers rise.*)

Sanguino. Retire, my sons; and remember midnight, my daughters. At our cell—alone—alone!

All the Villagers. We will obey you, holy father. (*All exclaim, aside.*) But 'tis mysterious.

(*Exeunt villagers on one side—all the Chirson* [illegible] *Hermits, except Sanguino, on the other.*)

Sanguino. My son, of all the villagers there's one infant still permission to the daughter our blessing to receive.

Fellitree. Holy father, innocent is she, and therefore needs it not.

Sanguino. (*Aside.*) 'Tis strange! I'll question him.—Think'st thou, my son, I'm not [illegible] hermit?

Fellitree. (*Aside.*) To seem too well informed may be dangerous. I must dissemble.—Wherefore [illegible] father, so it must be allowed. But, without mystery, what would become of melo-dramas!

† This expedient, though on the present occasion a very obvious one, is somewhat hackneyed. But like "mystery," perhaps it is indispensable.

dwell in solitary caves,

he pay for this. Thou

with others' deeds. Heaven

that you seem.

Fellitreed. at midnight! Let

blessing to receive will come!

Fellitreed. No, holy father

Strangledorff the reward of virtue.

Fellitreed. Nay, for virtue

how so well know you the Baron's

Sanguino. (*Aside.*) By

myself. Well, do even as

be *Fellitreed.* The Baron is a

enemy, and in absence all

their attention is dangerous.

father.

assertion of Fellitreed, he is requested to

Sanguino. Good-bye, my children!

Felltreco. (*Aside.*) Ahem! I have not always luck what I notice.*

(*Exit with Lubatta into the cottage.*)

Sanguino. Too plain he knows my secret—he must be disposed of.† Yet there is one he cannot know. (*Pointing towards the castle, and with a fiendlike laugh.*) There I defy the world itself to penetrate my mystery. (*Thunder and music—night comes on—he whistles—hermits appear.*) Retire to the Rive Rock; there await my orders. (*Hermits disappear —music and lightning.*) 'T will be a stormy night: 't is as I could wish. (*Hail, rain, wind, and music.*) 'T is well, the storm increases.

Poltreono. (*Without.*) Holloa! holloa!

Sanguino. Ha! sure I 'm not mistaken! By hell, 't is she; What brings her here? No matter; she must be disposed of. And her companion too—the

he is forewarned, that melo-dramatic moralists are cautious men, and never venture a sentiment which has not ages of experience to support it: thus they never trust themselves beyond "Virtue is its own reward," "Heaven will protect the innocent," "Mercy well becomes the brave," &c. &c. Their old school-copies cut up to great advantage.

* More mystery! the plot thickens. To speak out, this Felltreco is neither more nor less than—but the reader shall enjoy the pleasure of the surprise in its appointed place.

† This phrase, according to Mr. George Robins, means *to be sold* —taken melo-dramatically, its signification is, *to be stabbed, hanged, throttled, or shot*, as may best suit the convenience of the case. Numerous examples of it may be found in the first melo-drama that comes to hand.

for wear even in his time. If the public cannot console themselves for the want of novelty, by a reflection which carried consolation into the bosom of a king, and a wise one too, they must be hard to please.

Enter [illegible]

Lubetta. As it is far to the [illegible] haps you will prefer reposing in [illegible]

Poltroono. Indeed, I don't like [illegible] I don't half like her looks.

Baroness. Willingly, sir, [illegible] your solitude intrude we will not.

Sanguino. As you please. [illegible] Curse on her intrusion! but [illegible] for this.

(*Exit into the Wood* [illegible] *drops from his girdle.*)

Enter [illegible]

Poltroono. I'm glad we've got rid of [illegible] But who's this?—I don't like his [illegible]

Lubetta. 'Tis my dear father, [illegible] welcome.

Poltroono. Her father! all of a [illegible]

Felltreeo. We are honest, though [illegible] to fear beneath our roof you'll find [illegible]

Poltroono. Good wine needs no [illegible]

Felltreeo. A cheerful fire and a [illegible] Felltreeo can afford you.

(*Exit with Baroness and L* [illegible]

[illegible] *stridge.*

Poltroono. A homely meal [illegible]

(*Exit into the cottage.*)

SCENE II.—*The interior of Feltreed's Cottage.*

FELLTREED, BARONESS, LUBERTA, *and* PORTIONE, *at supper. A lamp burning.*

Baroness. Your story interests me. You say it is fifteen years since the rightful baron of Gloomdorff was forcibly taken from his castle. (*Aside.*) Alas! too well I know all this!

Felltreed. Aye, madam; and on that same fatal night, this peaceful territory first became the sojourn of a band of ruthless robbers. Their number is forty-one.

Baroness. The number also of the hermits.

Felltreed. Then, too, appeared these hermits, who took possession of the River-Rock, to which unknown the entrance is to all except themselves. 'T is said, they pass their nights in prayer and watching; but I suspect, since none return who thither go——

Baroness. Foul murder! and yet 't is strange that still they thither hie.

Felltreed. 'T is so.* The villagers oft have tracked them, through the forest of blood; but their lives have ever paid the forfeit of their rashness.

* I am quite of their opinion.

not done.†

too well I could inform her—

he still?

hope so. (*Music expressive of*

woodman's habit! Alas! delusive hope!

that mean attire! Oh! 't is impossible!

drama that might be fitted

proper to be done, what becomes of

† There is your answer, Mr. Petticoat,

‡ By no means; nothing is impossible

Rosamilda is

and unfortunate wood-cutter himself

§ A very rare possession for a

ship would do well to husband it carefully (*

[illegible] while away the time, I'll sing an air I once most fondly loved.

Pelitreco. Thank'ee, Madame Bonasilda; for whenever I hear that air I sleep like a top! *(He falls asleep.)*

Felltreco. Bonasilda! Alas! my hopes are flown.

Baroness sings and accompanies herself on the guitar.

When first we fondly crazy loved,
We stray'd together wildly wild,
Our passion was by friends approved,
And Egbert swore to be my bride."

(Here Felltreco falls asleep.)

Lubetta. (*Aside.*) That air! should it be he! This will decide it. Oh! madam, prythee, for mercy's sake, on my knees I implore you—lend me the guitar.

Lubetta sings.

And years rolld on, and Egbert's heart
Was ever constant, ever kind;

(The Baroness falls asleep.)

And oft they swore they ne'er would part,
Yet Cupid, oh! is painted——

[illegible] (as I never yet met with one in a melo-drama, I much doubt), [illegible] this kind of dramatic literature, ideas are not "as plenty as blackberries."

"This is poetry equal, at least, to the opening chorus," Let us dance," &c.

extinguishes the lamp.

A trap-door is seen to open, and

Sanguino and his gang ascend

mits' cloaks are thrown open, and

robbers' costume. They

in short jackets of damask

boots, and naked legs; each

several pistols, and a dagger

common roasting-spit. As

shaggy black heads and

cept BLOODRANSOMBY *and*

as the most cruel, are

They each carry a dark

cautiously about the stage.

passes his lanthorn before the faces

(*Appropriate music.*)

Sanguino. 'Tis well; they

certain.

The Baroness moves—they all

and bend in an attitude of

Cut-throats. Shall we dispatch them?

Sanguino. Ever for shedding blood!

Harm them not for your life, but

then all your daggers in their bosoms.

A convenient gun of wood. This is

drama. All the *dramatis personæ* are

Bloodmandorff. You are too humane.*

(*Music. Several of the robbers take up the Baroness and Lubetta, and descend the trap with them; the rest follow.*)

Sanguino. Now, proud fair one, art thou in my power! Too late will Felltreeo repent his opposition to Sanguino. (*He descends the trap, which, in falling, awakes Felltreeo and Poltroono.*)

Felltreeo. Where is my child, my Lubetta?

Poltroono. Where my mistress, the Baroness Gloomdorff?

Felltreeo. Oh, then, 't was she, my dear, my long-lost wife!

Poltroono. Your wife! Yes, it must be; my honour'd long-lost master! (*Falls at his feet—music.*)

Felltreeo. Yes, the rightful Baron of Gloomdorff, beneath these homely garments cautiously disguised. But 't is no time for parley. If, as I suspect—Ha, what means this? (*Takes up a lanthorn left by one of the robbers.*) 'T is but too certain—it bears Sanguino's name! Captives in the River-Rock, then are they lost indeed! Its entrance all unknown, no mortal power can save them.

* The kind-hearted soul! These conflicts between cruelty and humanity are to be found in all the pieces of this nature. They beget, on the part of the spectators, a sort of interest in favour of banditti, and serve to hint that, here and there, may be found a generous assassin, who does not kill for the mere pleasure of killing.

Poltroono. For virtue is [illegible] hope.—'Tis well remembered—[illegible] *from his pocket the paper dropped by* [illegible] horror! read here!

Felltreeo. My blood freezes while I [illegible] "Annual statement of the victims [illegible] Crimson Hermits, corrected to the 31st [illegible] Oh, bloody record! (*turns the leaf*) Total, [illegible] dred and thirty-seven."

Poltroono. And see, too! (*reads*) "[illegible] cepted—signed—Cut-throato."

Felltreeo. The ruthless emissary of Sang[illegible]

Poltroono. And, seemingly, his accoun[illegible] ral, too.

Felltreeo. But see what follows! (*reads*) only entrance to the River-Rock is [illegible] northern tower of the castle of Gloomdor[illegible]

Poltroono. And further—"To gain the [illegible] Rock the castle must be first secured."

Felltreeo. And further—a plan of the [illegible] cations.

Poltroono. And further—their weakest [illegible] indicated.

Felltreeo. And further—when it may [illegible] cessfully be attacked. The heavens are [illegible] Oh, happy paper!* But here come our [illegible]

* Happy paper, indeed.—The property-man went [illegible] Philip Astley, and, with a long face, informed him [illegible] white paper left to make snow with, and desired him [illegible]

(*Enter the Male Villagers.*)

Now to the attack—follow me—we 'll rescue them or die.

Poltroono. But hold, we are unarmed.

Felltreeo. Alas! 't is true! then all again is hopelessness and despair.

Poltroono. (*Perceiving several pistols and swords left by the robbers.*) Ha! what have we here?

Felltreeo. A box of cartridges, too!* Sure the heavens smile on us! (*They all arm themselves.*) But let us kneel in gratitude. (*They kneel — music.*) Now, brave companions, 't is lovely woman in distress! We 'll rescue them, or perish in the attempt!

to act under so embarrassing a circumstance. Astley, who (like the makers of the Crimson Hermits) knew that when you cannot do as you will you must do as you can, was immediately ready with an expedient, and replied:—"Well, well, well, what do you stand there for? if you have no white to snow, you must snow *brown*." A captious critic might, perhaps, reproach Sanguino with indiscretion for committing such important information to paper, and with extraordinary stupidity for not taking better care of it. But the entrance to the Rock being, as Felltreeo says, "all unknown," I beg Mr. Critic to suggest some more probable way of getting at it, if he can. Melo-drama-makers, whose business it is to get their personages into very wonderful scrapes, must find some very wonderful means of getting them out again; and, to this end—they snow all the colours of the rainbow.

* The robbers not only leave their arms behind them, but ammunition, too! Felltreeo may well exclaim, "The heavens smile on us!" But how else would you arm two-and-forty men in a little village, at midnight?—Besides, the effect!—stage effect!

GRAND CHORUS.

(To the [illegible])

There to conquer or to die;
The valiant brave, with courage, [illegible],
When lovely beauty is the prize!
[illegible]
'Tis female [illegible]

(*Exeunt, brandishing their*

[It was intended to give merely a specimen, by [illegible] delightful and interesting production, as has been done [illegible] but having, doubtless, awakened in the reader a deep [illegible] to the fate of the personages concerned, it would be [illegible] to relieve it. Were the entire piece to be given, [illegible] them whom but limited extracts have been made, [illegible] lous (and justly jealous) of so marked a distinction. [illegible] avoid a proceeding so offensive, and to satisfy the [illegible] the reader, a rapid outline of the remaining [illegible] son HERMITS is annexed.]

Scene III. is what may be called [illegible] *course;* a scene containing the usual [illegible] pensable business of melo-drama. It is [illegible] *of course*, it thunders and lightens. Fellow[illegible] Poltroono enter. In the *last* scene they [illegible] they would go and rescue the ladies, or per[illegible] attempt! and *this* is ingeniously contrived [illegible] that they are going. Having said a few [illegible] convince the audience that their valour [illegible] mination are in a flourishing condition, [illegible] the scene. Scarcely have they turned their [illegible] when, *of course*, banditti appear. *Of* [illegible] stride cautiously, and on tiptoe, across the [illegible] they place their ears to the ground, *of*

of course, hear footsteps; *of course*, they brandish their long daggers; swear, *of course*, that Felltreco shall not escape them; but, this time, *of course*, he does.

Scene IV. Presents a view of the banquetting-hall of Gloomdorff Castle. The usurper and his forty knights, attired in splendid habits, are seated at a table, on which is placed a sumptuous repast. The usurper on a throne at the upper end—on each side of him stands a vacant chair—soft music heard—the usurper exclaims, "Ha! they come!" The Baroness, Lubetta, and forty female villagers, in splendid dresses, are ushered in:—they fancy they recognise the features of the usurper—not sure—throw out a cunning question, relative to the Crimson Hermits—no answer—the Baroness (*aside*) exclaims, "'T is strange!" The Baroness and Lubetta are placed one on each side of the usurper—he pleads his passion to them (usurpers, and melo-dramatic tyrants, are allowed to make love to two at a time), as does each of the knights to a villager. Their suit is, *of course*, rejected:—refreshments are offered by little girls in picturesque attitudes—the refreshments, like the suit of the usurper and his "myrmidons," as the Baroness emphatically terms them, is rejected. (Melo-dramatic heroines never eat.) The usurper, under the influence of the tender passion, is outrageously amiable, and roars his vows of affection "like any sucking dove:"—he orders a grand ballet to be

performed, expressly, as he says, "
of beauty;" but greatly distracts
beauty's attention by his
in his courtship. The Baroness,
pleads her virtue; Lubetta
once or twice exclaims, "Oh,
The usurper, finding his delicate
disregarded, becomes enraged,
"Like master like man:"—all this
out this scene, appear affected
ments and passions as the usurper,
the same instant; so that when
frowns with rage and disappointment,
and frown with rage and
dancers are ordered to retire—the
vengeance;—the ladies, after a short
agree to trust to Providence (finding
else remains to be done), whereupon
conveyed to the Raven-Rock, there to
death.—Thus endeth the first act.

ACT THE SECOND.

Scene I. opens with a chorus of
again swear to conquer or die, with
new-found, Lord (Feltreco), the
Gleesondorff. The spectators are
that, on the previous night, some
had suffered the loss of a young
female; and, it further appears, that

Hotspits are the cause of their absence. In proof of this we have the united testimony of the forty villagers, who had each found in their deserted apartment, as Felltreeo had done in his, a dark lanthorn, bearing the name of Sanguinb. The means of their sudden and secret removal does not long remain a mystery; for Poltroono, on a more careful examination of the fortunate paper, so opportunely lost and found in the first act, discovers, in a *nota-bene*, that there are subterraneous passages communicating between the River-Rock and every one of the cottages on the territory: the whole being thus in the power of those abominable Crimson Hermits. This is highly *melo*-dramatic. The Baron had previously called his saint to witness that his rage was at its height—he now begs him to take notice that it is considerably higher—but, anxious to spare the effusion of blood (meaning thereby his own and that of his party, for he vows to kill as many hermits as he can conveniently lay hands on), he proposes to take the castle by surprise; and, to that end, he and his followers assume the novel disguise of minstrels. By one of those *singular* instances of good fortune not uncommon in melo-dramas, it happens that they have each such a disguise about them; and, forthwith, they adopt them. All this passes under the very walls of the castle, which (so luck would have it!) is unguarded at the time. The Baron (Felltreeo), being an excel-

lent marksman, takes his cross-bow, [illegible] link in each of the main-chains which [illegible] draw-bridge; it falls with a [illegible] which, fortunately, is not heard in the [illegible] third time swearing to conquer or die, [illegible] enter.*

Scene II. discovers the usurper, in the [illegible] hall of the castle, holding consultation [illegible] followers.—The Baron and his party, [illegible] hind the columns, are listening. The Baron [illegible] Lubetta, together with all the females [illegible] the River-Rock, being, by the assembly, [illegible] convicted of "Virtue," it is determined [illegible] shall instantly be put to death—"be dispatched" [illegible] the formula of the sentence. The Baron's [illegible] horror upon this occasion is more to be [illegible] than his prudence, exclaims, "Blood-thirsty villains!" He and his party are discovered, [illegible] battle is about to ensue; when, finding that [illegible] ting on their minstrel disguises (in the [illegible] they had somehow or other mislaid their [illegible] surrender at discretion to the usurper. The [illegible] indicates no disposition towards using his [illegible] generously, and exclaiming, "Now am I the [illegible] power," orders them all to the River-Rock.

* The incident of the cross-bow is novel; but not [illegible] able for boldness and vigour of invention than [illegible] which we have hitherto seen, or are yet to see, in [illegible]

"be disposed of;" but adds (for some unexplained reason, or, which is as likely, for no reason at all), "at more convenient time." Poltroono, by having ingeniously contrived to assume the dress worn by the usurping party, and by mingling with them, alone escapes this decree.

The third and last scene exhibits the interior of the River Rock, an appalling combination of everything that has ever appeared, or been described, as an appendage to the cave of banditti. The ladies are chained to projections of the rock on one side—the gentlemen on the other; and by a refinement of cruelty, which none but so melo-dramatic a villain as the usurper could have contrived, the chains are just one inch too short to allow of the opposite sufferers embracing, which, undoubtedly, would somewhat have consoled them in their forlorn position. The Baron and Baroness distinctly recognise each other as man and wife, and Lubetta as their daughter; and eulogize the power of the voice of nature which whispered something to this effect at their first interview. Here follows a scene of heart-rending distress, which is interrupted by the arrival of the usurper and his followers, among whom is Poltroono. The tyrant threatens, the Baron defies; but in order at once to strike terror into the latter and his friends, at a signal given, the villains throw open their splendid habits, and discover themselves as the Crimson

Hermits!—A [illegible] mation—and a tabbaro gives signal the hermits are [illegible] a similar succession of crash, [illegible] quence. But here Poltroono's danger [illegible] Unprepared for this manœuvre, his [illegible] did dress as one of the usurper's [illegible] suspicion, and he is ordered "to be [illegible] the tyrant—usurping baron,—[illegible] unwilling too hastily to diminish his [illegible] mode of proving whether Poltroono [illegible] his band or an intruder, which [illegible] terest.† The number of the banditti, [illegible] guino himself, is forty-one—he ranges [illegible] —he proceeds to count them to [illegible] —all appears to be lost—he begins with [illegible] man, and ends with Poltroono, exclaiming [illegible] one: 't is well!" *Most* miraculously [illegible] take himself into the account, and [illegible] no one reminds him of the omission. [illegible] saved, and fortunately left alone to [illegible] ners. Sanguino and his "myrmidons," [illegible]

* These words prove that part of this piece is "[illegible] French: the inadvertence of the *translating* [illegible] his inability to "put" the phrase "into" English, [illegible] patch of the original sticking to his text. This, [illegible] occurrence.

† Nothing would be easier than to look in his [illegible] question would be settled at once;—but no, that [illegible] and un-(*melo*)-dramatic.

ing, and brandishing their daggers at their intended victims, sing a chorus, the burthen of which is

"Plunder, blood, and generous wine!"

and go out on their nightly business of depredation. Poltroono now, *of course*, discovers himself; *of course*, he releases his friends; *of course*, one of the robbers returns for something he needed not have left behind him; *of course*, he spreads an alarm; *of course*, the baron and his party arm themselves; *of course*, the banditti return: *of course*, a desperate battle ensues, and Poltroono, all coward as he was thought to be, *of course*, performs prodigies of valour. Each of the ladies, instead of getting out of the way of danger, *of course* places herself between two furious combatants, for the purpose, *of course*, of letting them strike at each over her head, and across her bosom; *of course*, without the slightest injury to her. The baron and his party are, *of course, all but* defeated; when Poltroono, rushing to the magazine, on which is inscribed, in large characters, PATENT DISCRIMINATING GUNPOWDER, and thrusting a lighted torch into it, an explosion takes place, by which the guilty are blown into millions of atoms, while the innocent remain unhurt. The baron and his friends come forward, bearing the affrighted females in their arms; they kneel amidst the falling fragments of rock and robbers, and, in a blaze of blue fire, green fire, red fire, yellow fire, and fire of all producible colours, thus concludes this master-piece of the

THE END.

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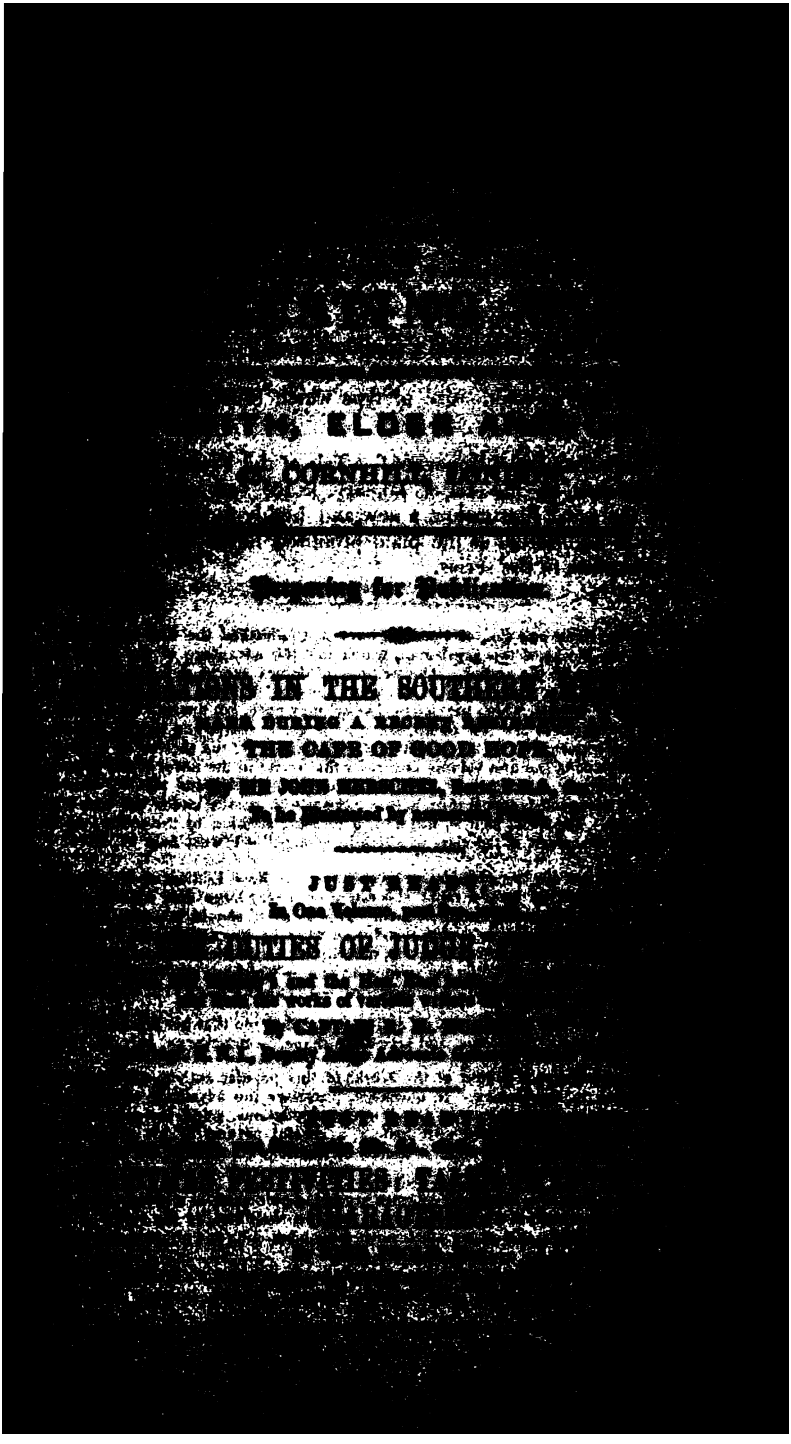

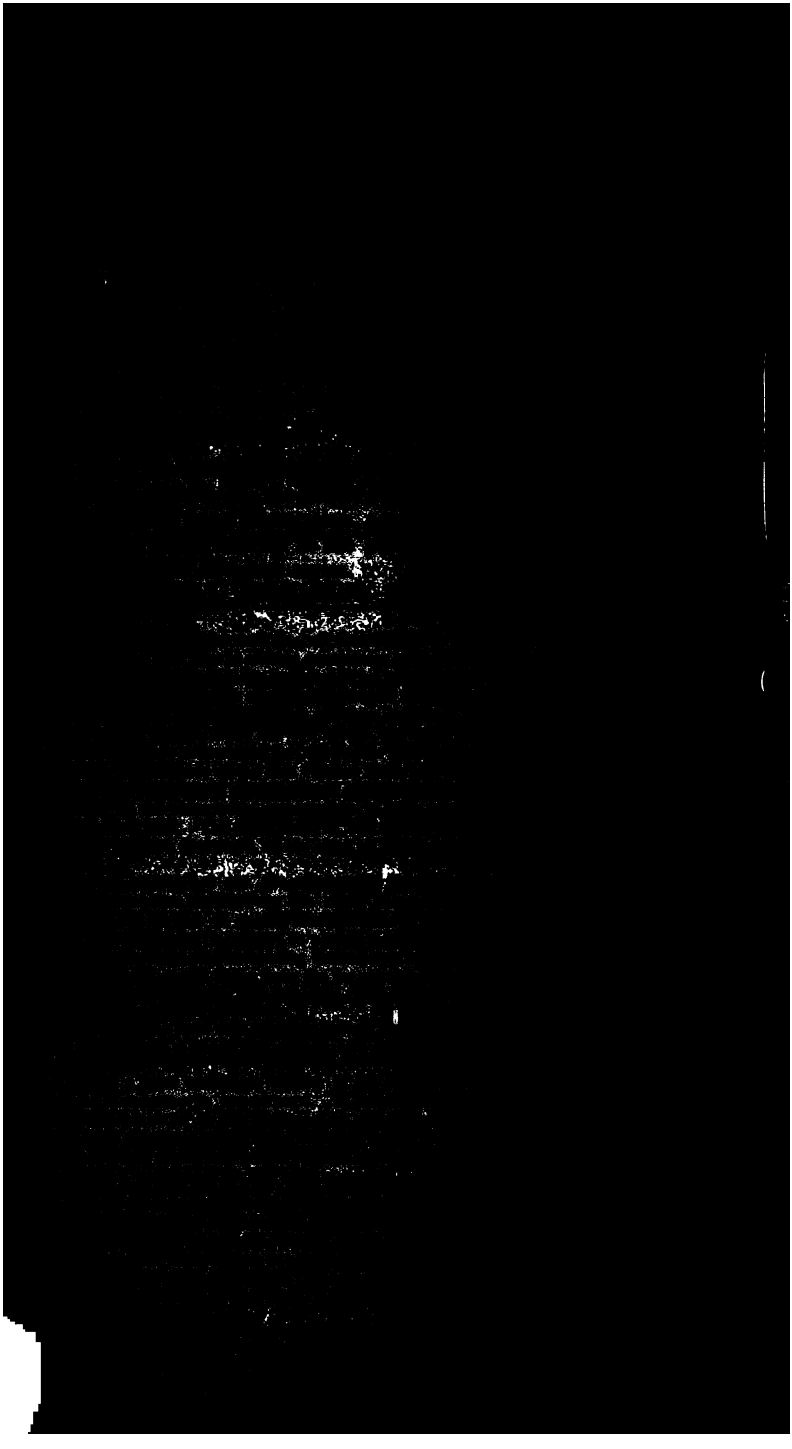

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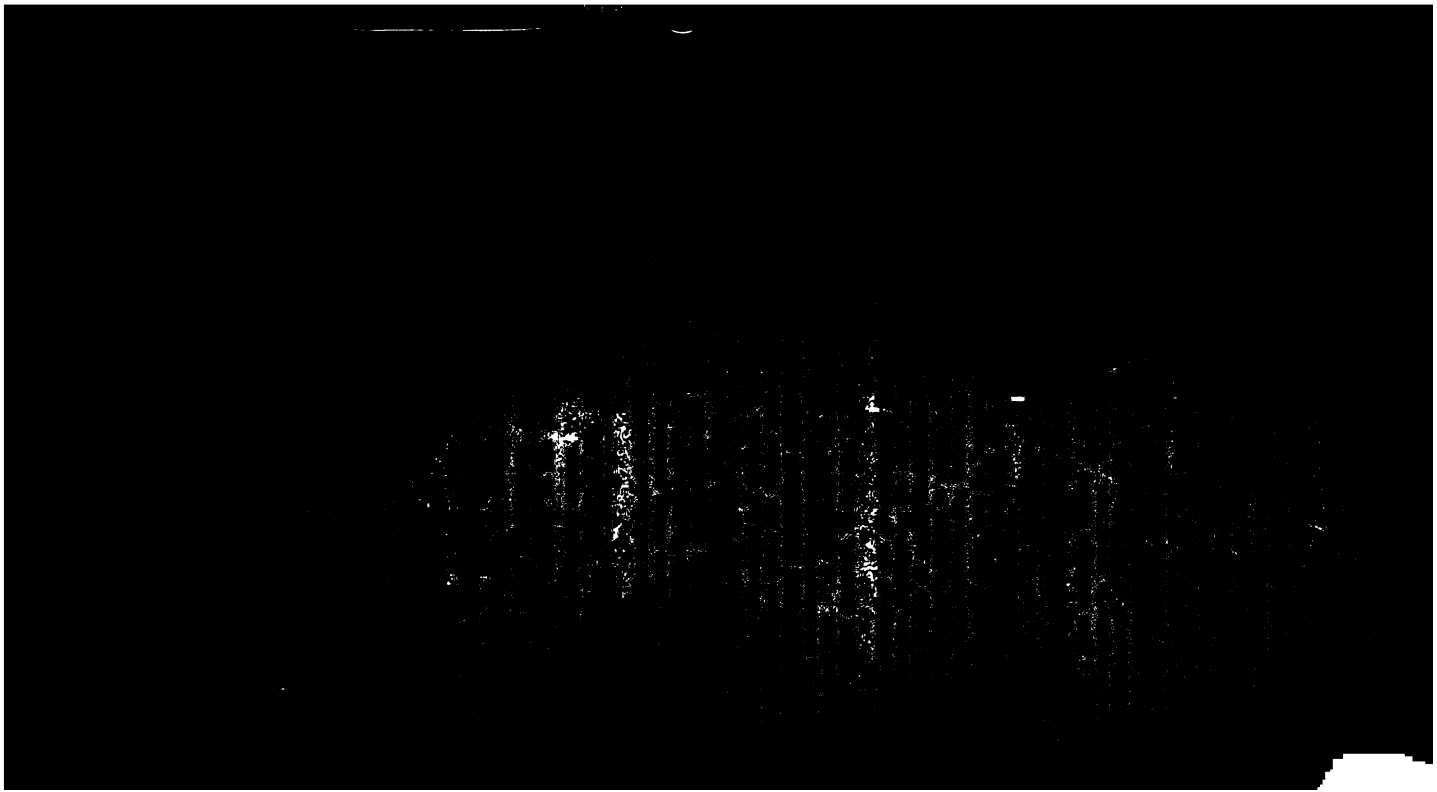

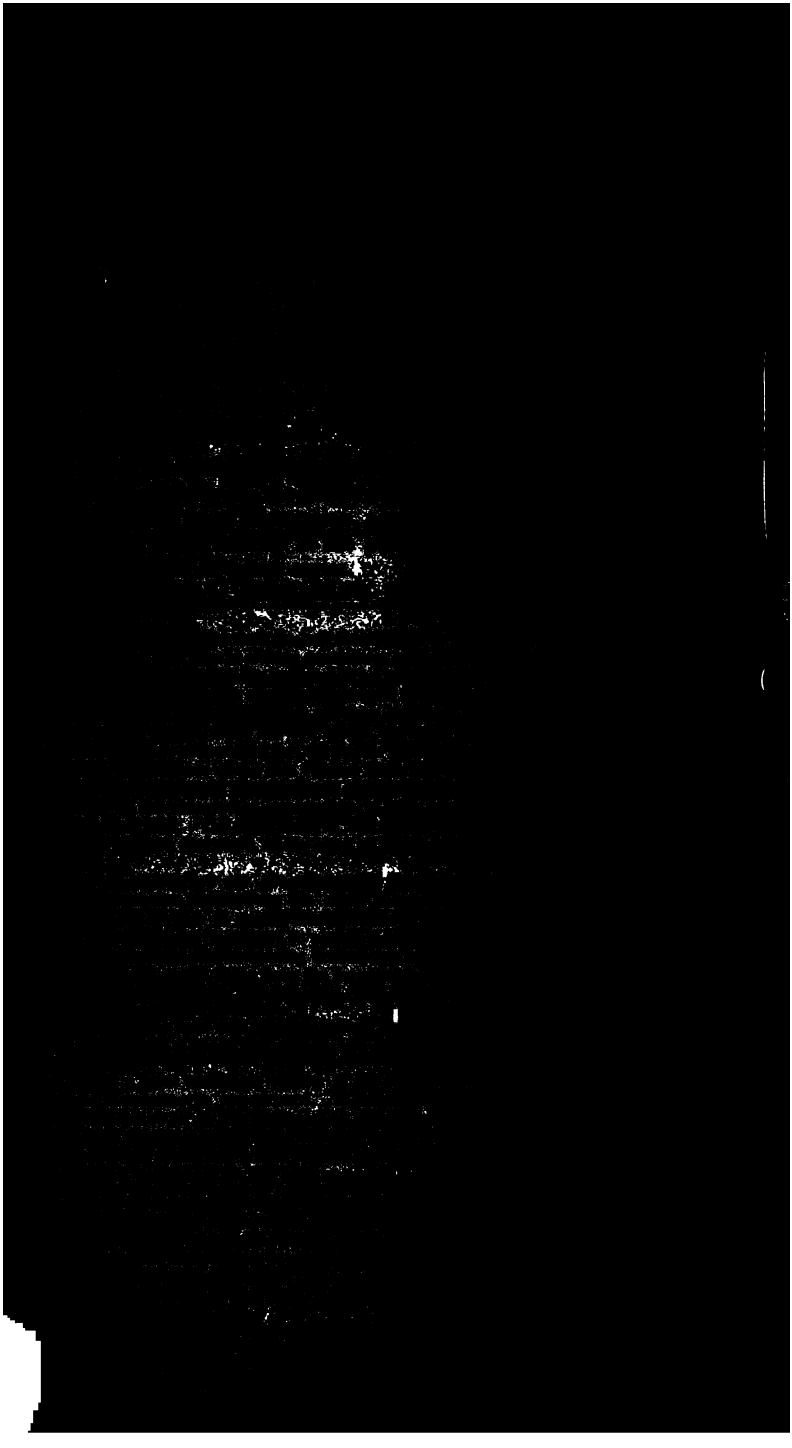

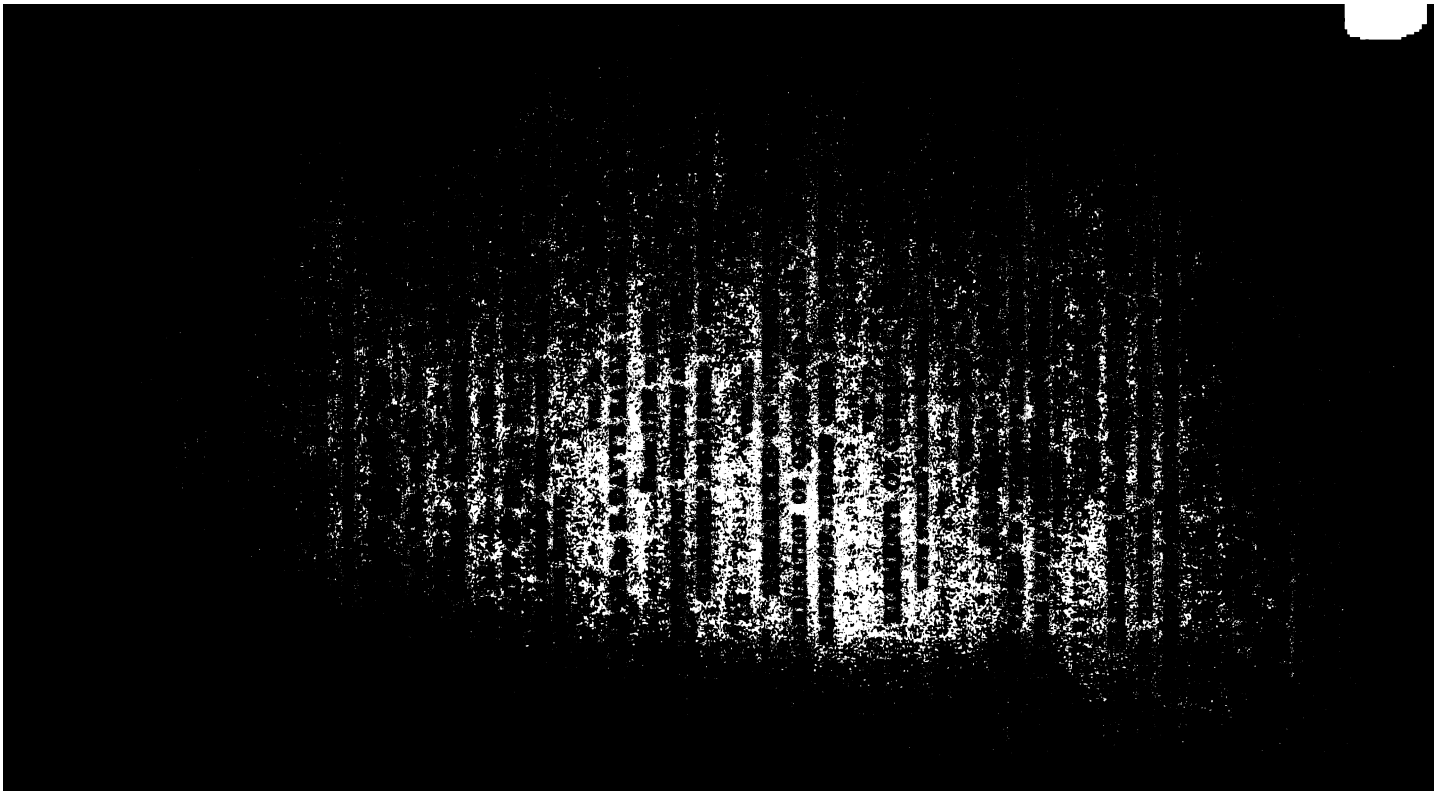

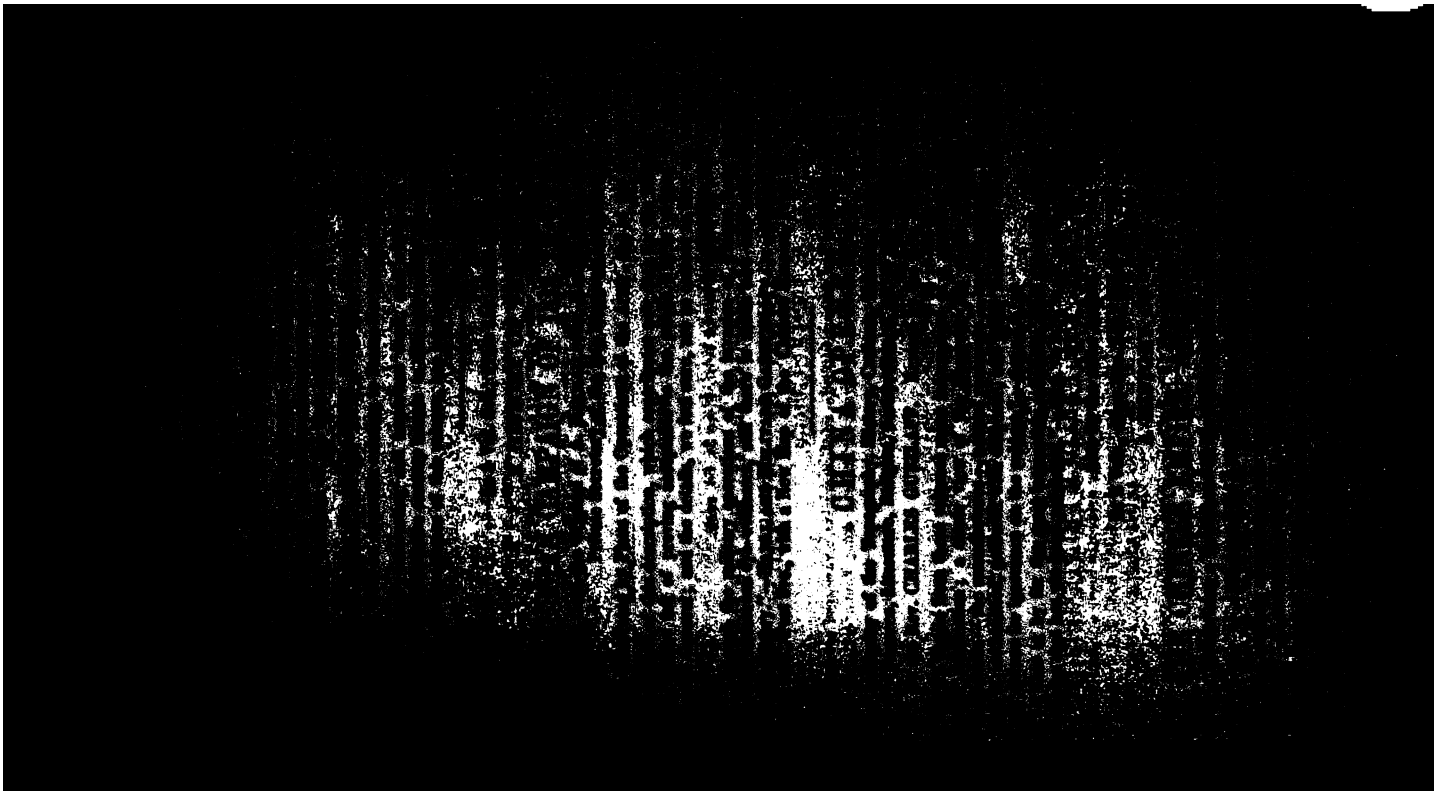

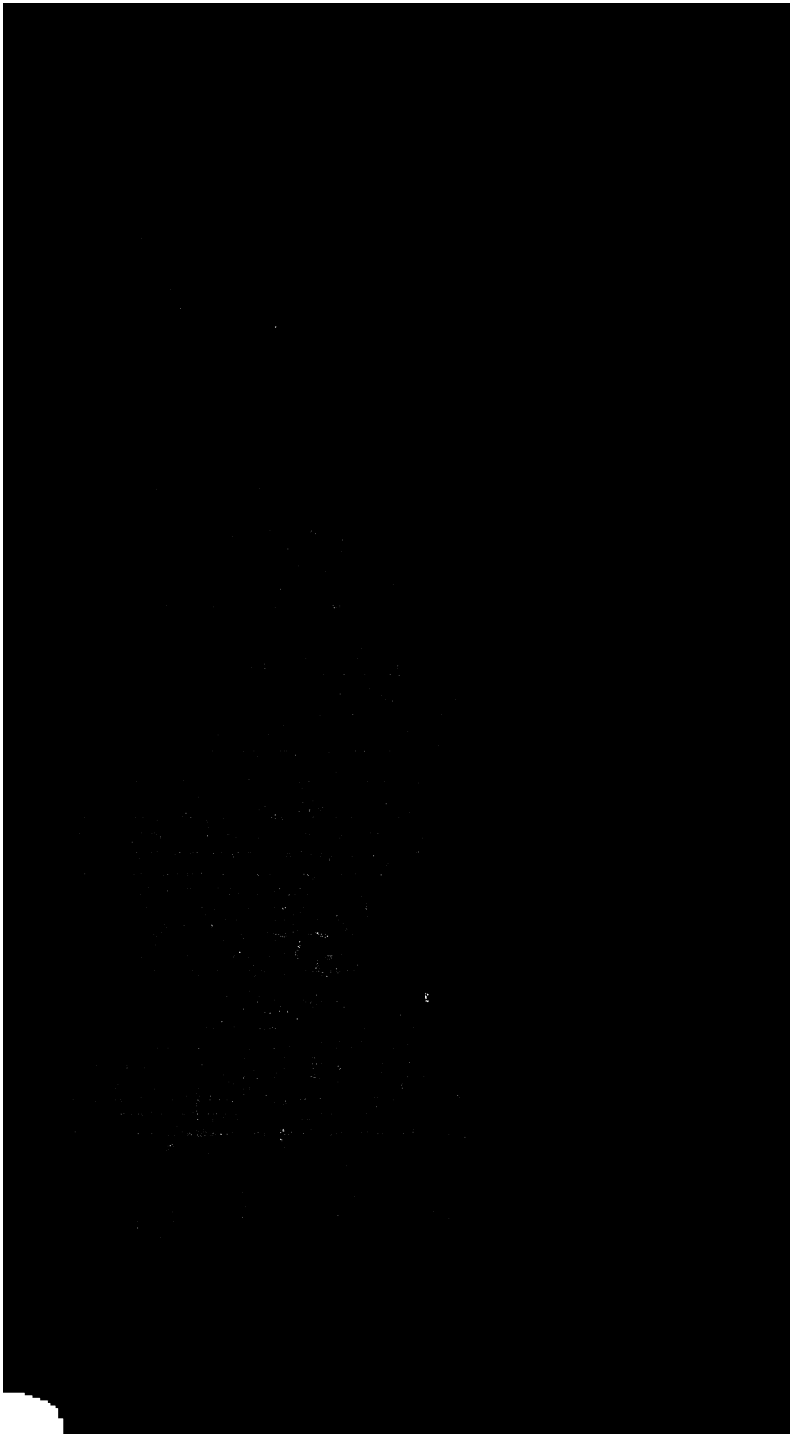

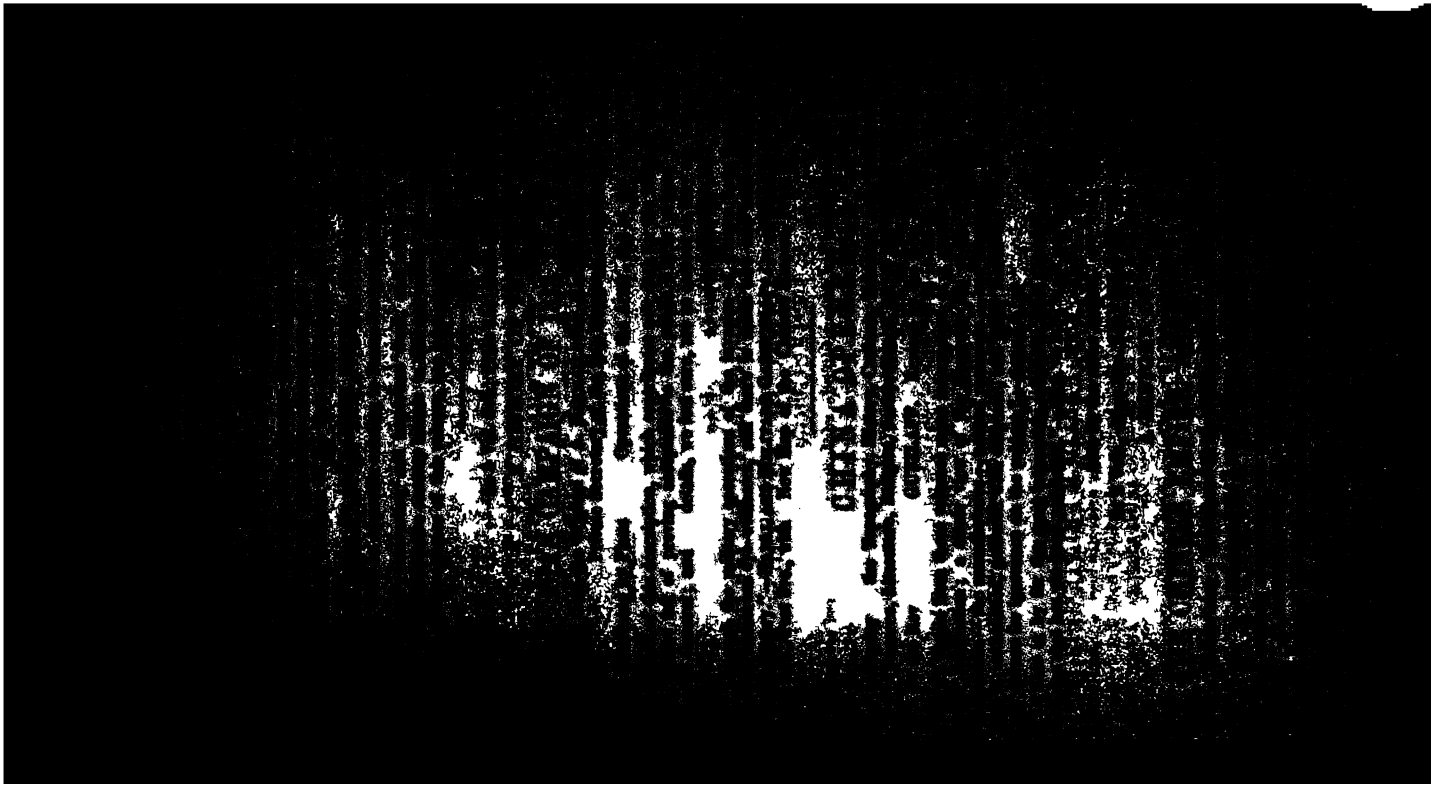

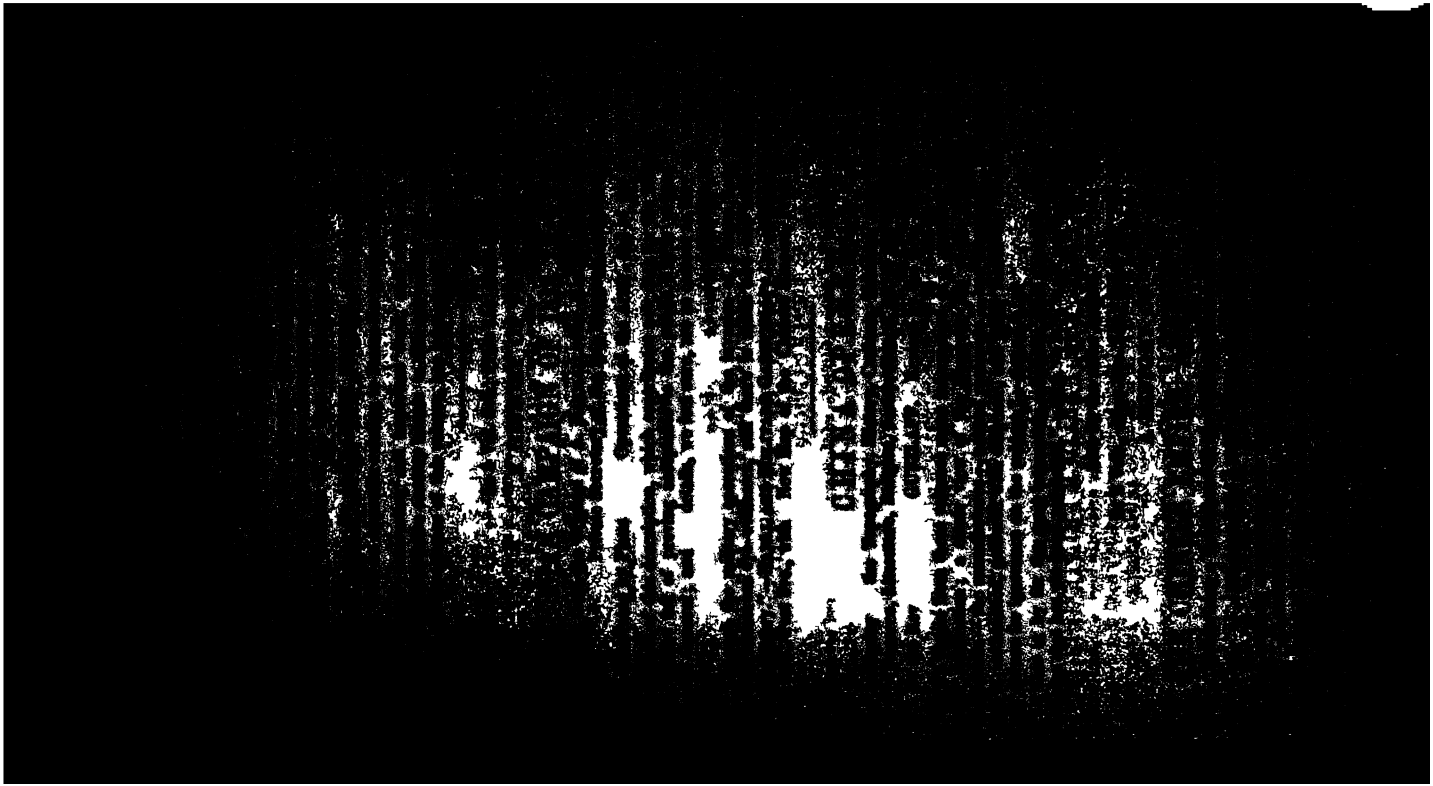

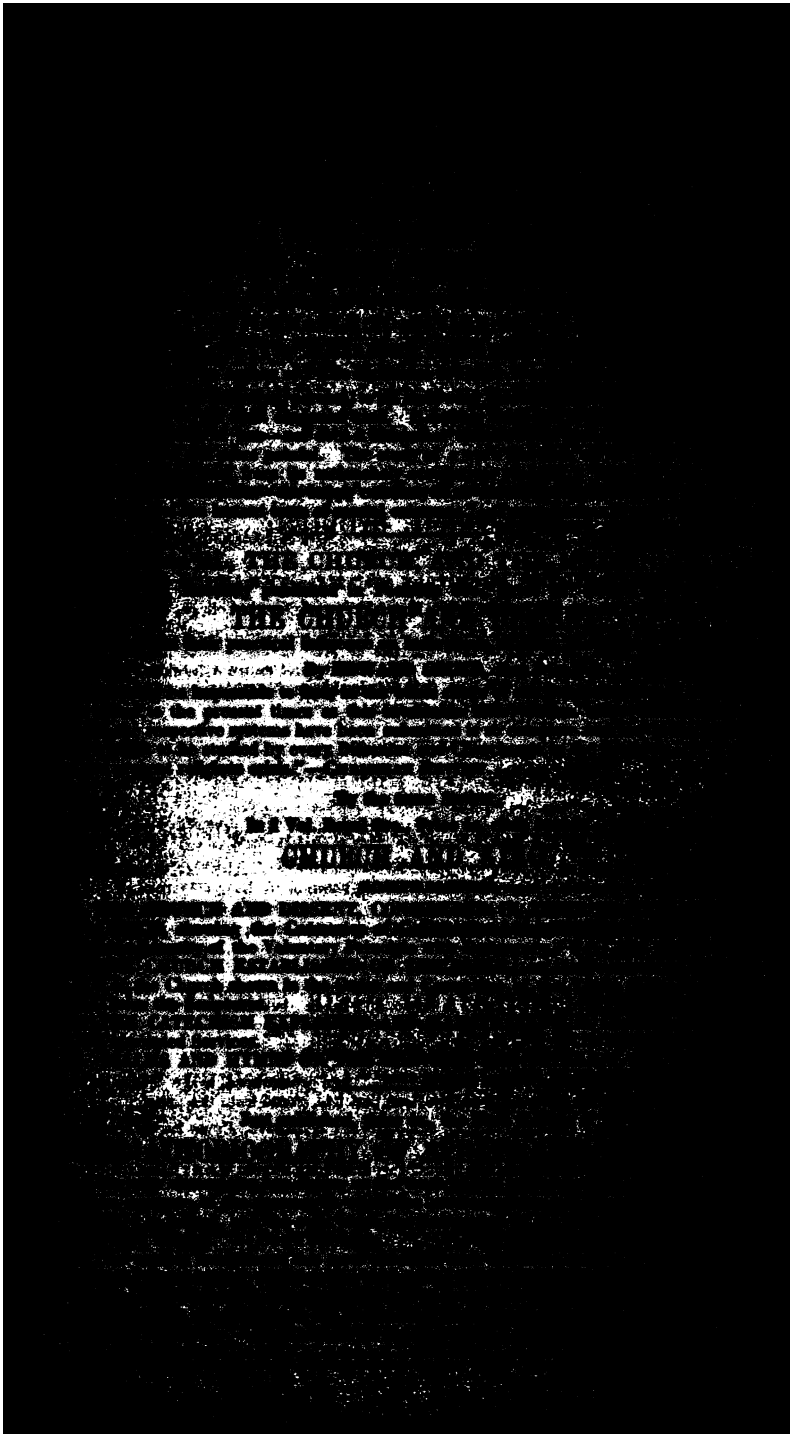

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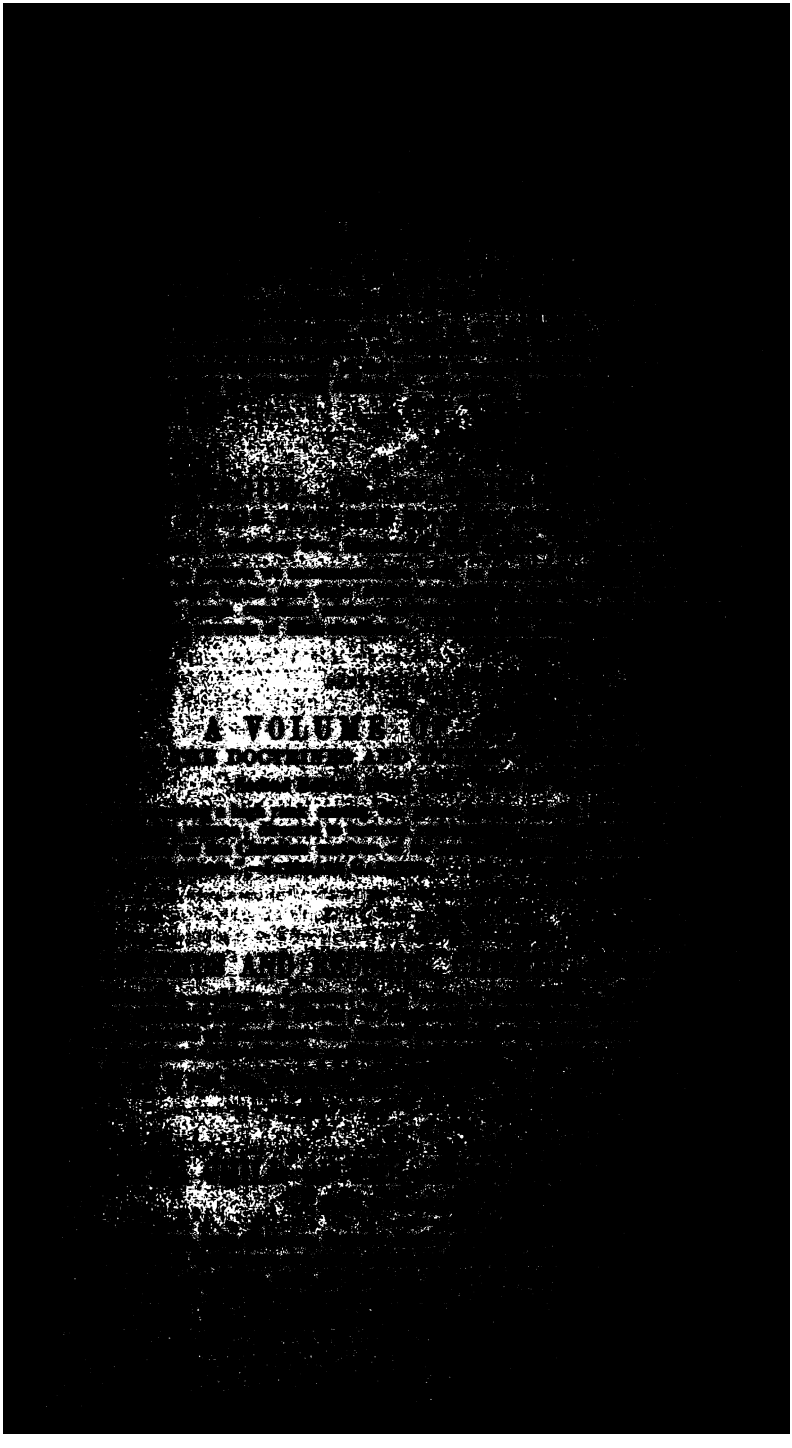

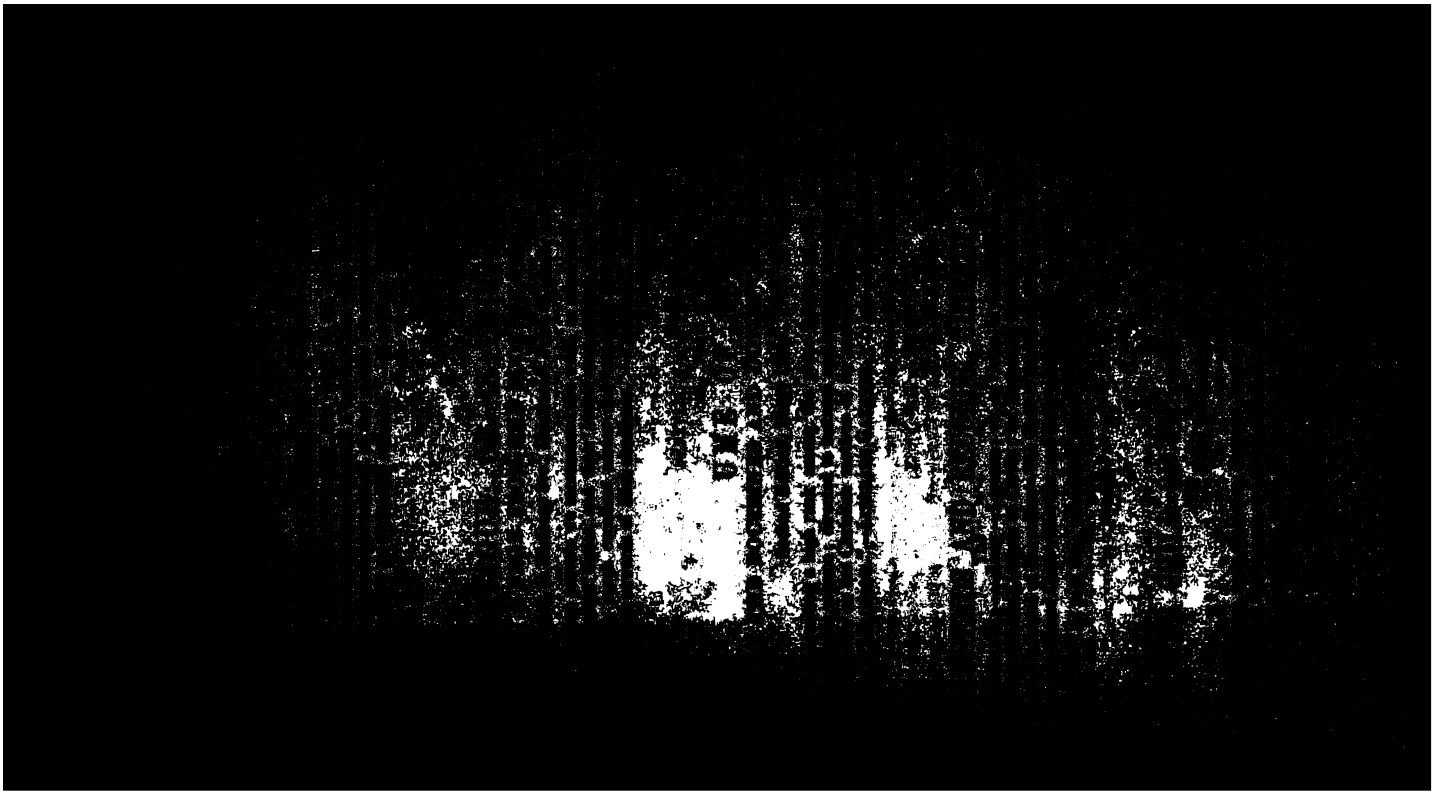

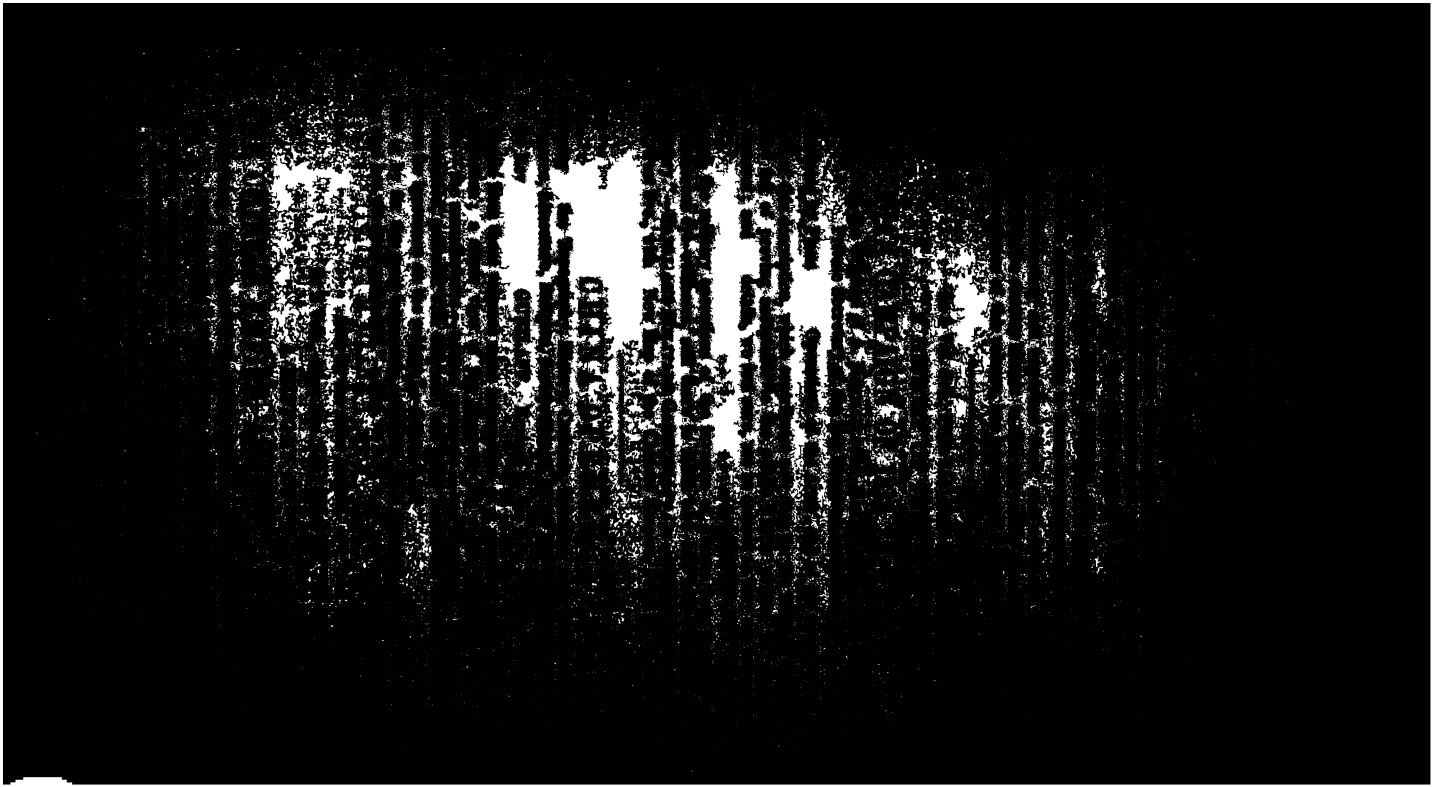

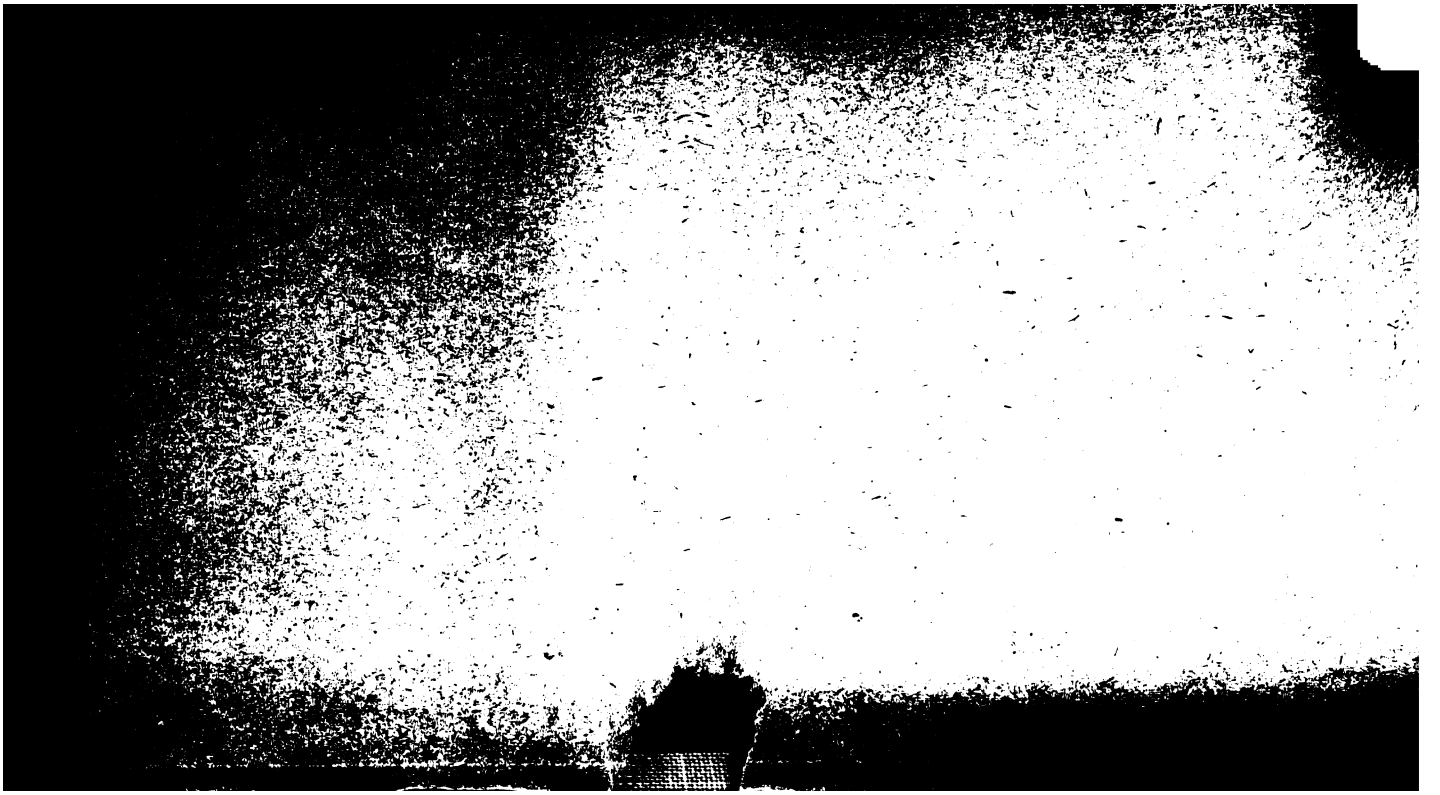

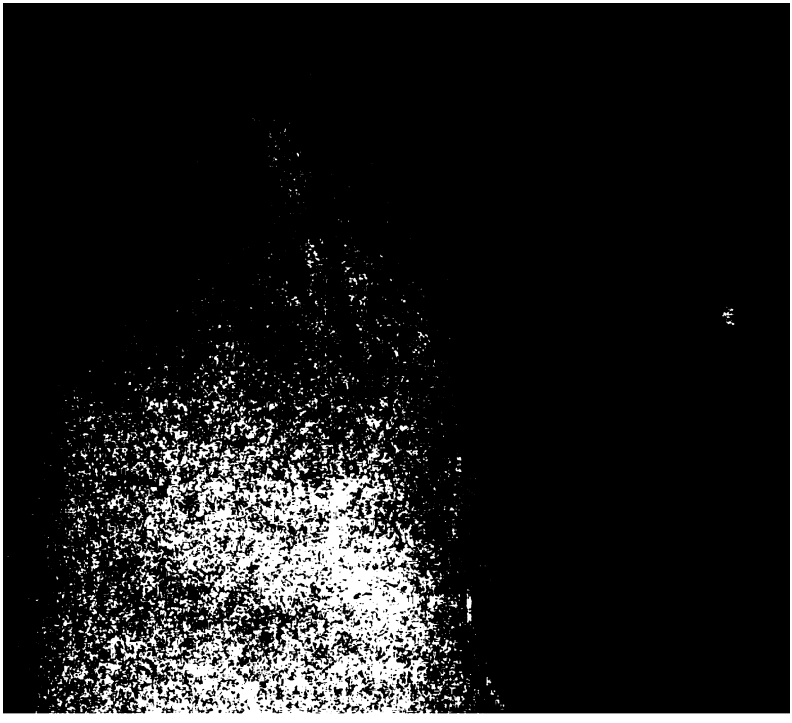
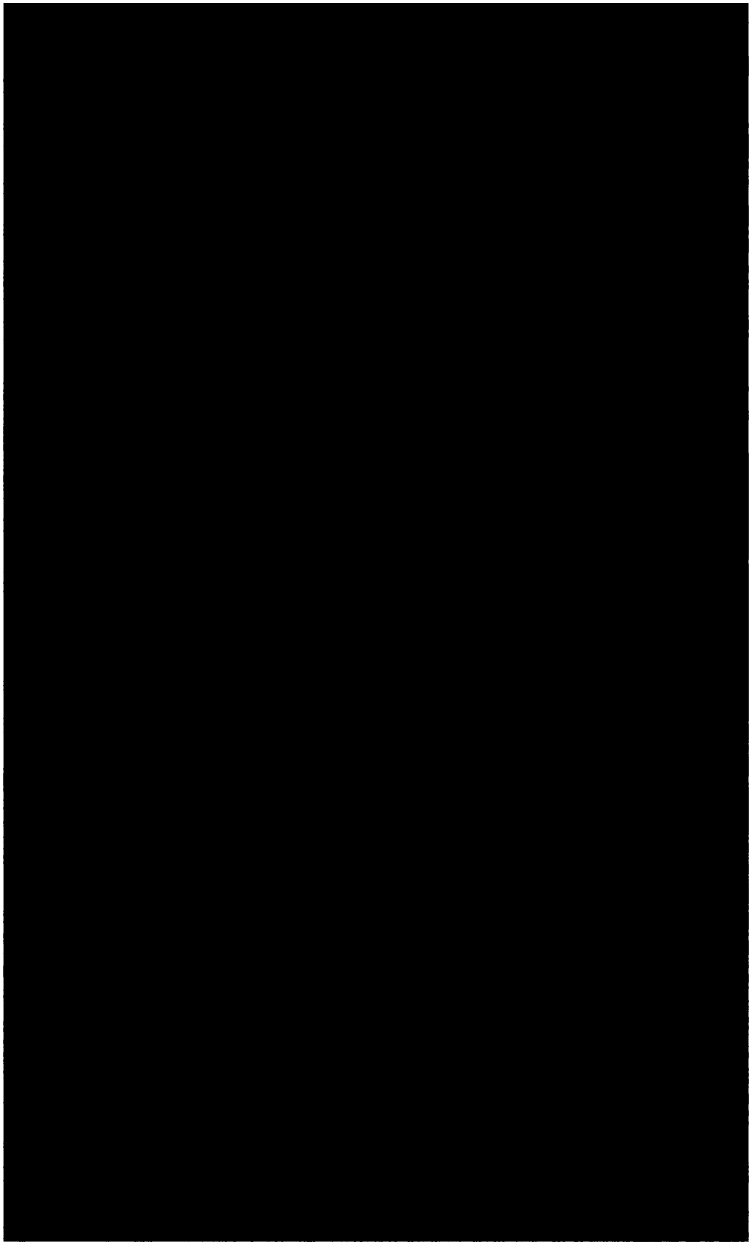
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